

A PEEP AT A NEAPOLITAN NUNNERY.

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THE sayings and doings of religious sisters have not long since filled numberless columns of the daily press, and attracted a considerable amount of public attention. Their speech and their silence, their thoughts and their deeds, their hopes and their fears, their punishments and their rewards, their joys and their sorrows, their loves and their ha-

treds, in fine, their lives and their deaths, have formed the subjects of the discussion, the comment, the abuse, and the praise of thousands of Englishmen and women. Every petty detail of their uninteresting existence—how they slept, and how they awoke; what they ate, drank, and avoided; whether beef or mutton was their staple viand; whether

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they placed their shoes on their heads, or where mere ordinary beings wore them; whether they washed their soiled linen in private or *coram populo*; whether they required the permission of the Superior before using their nail brushes or dressing combs; how often were they allowed to touch soap and water; whether they might sneeze or cough without previous sanction from the authorities; how troublesome chilblains and rebellious sisters were treated—all these things, and many more, have been eagerly scanned, canvassed, and criticised. It may, therefore, not be out of place to cast a glance at a foreign nunnery, and to raise the veil from a daily life differing from that referred to as much as the ice fields of Greenland differ from the sandy desert of Sahara.

It was in 1864 that Naples was surprised by the astonishing revelations of conventual secrets, of a lady of noble lineage, an energetic, passionate, intellectual, vindictive woman, who had for twenty years suffered from priestcraft, and who wove her adventures into a narrative, possessing the charms of romance, and yet bearing the impress of unvarnished truth. The statements made by Enrichetta Caracciolo obtained numerous confirmations, and as her memoirs—though we believe translated into English—are singularly little known, we propose briefly dipping into them, and culling a few of the remarkable facts therein recorded.

Enrichetta Caracciolo was the fifth daughter of a cadet of the princely house of Forino, Marshal Caracciolo, who at forty espoused a maiden of the ripe age of fourteen. He was blessed with six dowerless girls, and at his decease the sole inheritance he bequeathed his family was his sword. Enrichetta, whose elder three sisters had already secured husbands, seems to have been a fine, lively young creature, with considerable powers of, and still greater desires for, enjoyment, and she had already been noticed at court by the gallant Bomba, who had actually whirled her in his arms in the giddy waltz. Nothing could well have been further from her mind than perpetual reclusion. Indeed, she had already expressed her readiness to encounter the trials of wedded life, and had even carried on two flirtations, the second of

which appeared likely to lead to the consummation devoutly wished for by her. But as both Romeo's father and Juliet's mother agreed in opposing the match, and as Romeo and Juliet themselves were as perverse and unjust as lovers usually are, they eventually parted, and, as it proved, for ever.

Our heroine laughed, when, one afternoon, the waiting-woman of a relative, the abbess of a convent, after depositing a tray of sweetmeats, triumphantly informed her that the chapter had unanimously voted for her admission. But it was not a joke. The pale, shivering, and then passionately sobbing maiden, was gravely told by her mother that their poverty had constrained her to seek for her child a provisional asylum, under the protection of their kinswoman, for a period fixed at two months, when it was anticipated the pension due by the king might be granted. In vain poor Enrichetta wept and implored. In vain various friends offered her a home. She had no fortune, and her only guardian, her parent, was inexorable.

St. Gregory the Armenian was one of the oldest religious establishments in Naples. It had been founded by an immigration of Greek virgins from Constantinople at the time of the Byzantine empire, and the rule of St. Basilus soon was replaced by that of St. Benedict. The holy sisters worshipped in a handsome church of the composite order, and richly decorated with frescoes, and dwelt in an extensive building, round the temple of God, of vast and princely magnificence. At this period the nuns dreamt and dined in spacious and commodious dormitories and refectories—meditated in wide cloisters, ornamented with a fountain and statues—and contemplated the beauties of nature from lofty terraces decorated with flowers and paintings, whence splendid views of Vesuvius and the bay of Naples could be leisurely enjoyed. But high walls hid the recluses from the gaze of the profane, and when Enrichetta Caracciolo heard the gloomy portals of St. Gregory close behind her, when she listened to their heavy clanging, and to the sinister rattling of the massive bolts and bars, when she felt the bright sun and the glowing light, and smiling Nature, and the gay world, and her fond sisters, suddenly shut out

from her—her heart sank and her frame shuddered.

Our heroine became the object of the curiosity, if not the antipathy, of the numerous and wealthy sisterhood, and sneers, annoyances, and discontent worried a hot, excitable nature into a nervous fever. On recovery she assumed the educational garb, consisting of a long black tunic with tight sleeves, apron, and collar of white muslin, and a small scapulary. Two, three, and four weary months dragged their slow length, and the truant mother redeemed not her promise. The sinfulness of longing to mix again with the wicked world was strongly reprov'd by Enrichetta's confessor, who urged upon her to exchange the history of Italy for the legends of the Saints, and to study especially the Acts of St. Benedict, whose statue in the church had recently administered a material rebuff, with one of its wooden legs, to the shoulders of a scoffer. Indeed, our heroine herself became the subject of a miracle. She was, it seems, liable to dreams and night-mares, and one night she awoke with the tingling of a bell in her ear. Her waiting-maid roused the whole establishment with shouts of "A miracle!" and abbess, nuns, novices, pupils, and serving-women, declared at once in a chorus, that St. Benedict had summoned Enrichetta to join his rule.

Nevertheless, in spite of this supernatural event, when the day of release which had been repeatedly deferred at length arrived, Enrichetta rejoicingly quitted her cage. But alas, it was only to be hurled from the heights of Olympus to the depths of Hades. Her mother had sought solace in matrimony, and her Romeo had found another Juliet. A Sicilian nunnery or a step-father were the only alternatives before her. A brother-in-law, who was disposed to afford her shelter, was peremptorily forbidden by a paternal police from committing so unjustifiable an act. Destitute, friendless, unprotected, she was advised to return to the convent. In despair, she entreated the abbess to receive her back for a short time. The sisters consented, provided she elected to become a nun. She hesitated, she trembled, the cold dew fell from her brow. To be thrust homeless into the world, or to be immured into a living

tomb—away from the joys, the affections of this life—to follow, in a word, an existence abhorrent to her soul. Her young sister whispered to her to assent, and to trust to the chapter of accidents for release.

The fatal monosyllable issued from Enrichetta's pale lips, and she was a slave for life. Then the convent bells pealed merrily, and on the morrow she was welcomed by festive shouts, by joyous chimes, by the firing of guns, and by the acclamations of the community, and during the evening the Abbess regaled the company, including visitors, to ices and cakes.

In the dead of night the poor girl threw herself at her kinswoman's feet, and in tears unbosomed herself. But the Rubicon had been crossed, and retreat was impossible. The wailings of the weak-minded Abbess, who deplored the disgrace that would befall a Caracciolo, who feared the discredit the convent and the bell of St. Benedict would suffer, and who dreaded the observations of the Vicar, the Cardinal, and the Press, subdued Enrichetta, and she resigned herself to her fate.

A year and a half afterwards, when the required age of twenty was attained, the bride, attired in a magnificent white dress and veil, and bedecked with a wreath of jewelled flowers, was escorted by a princess and a duchess from her mother's residence, where she had been permitted to pay a farewell visit, to the nunnery.

The gates of St. Gregory the Armenian were thrown open with the customary festivities, and a procession led by a priest with uplifted crucifix and a military band loudly if not harmoniously celebrated her arrival. The church had been decorated with white and red hangings, which formed a brilliant contrast to the gay costume of the ladies invited to the ceremony, who occupied one side of the aisle, and to the sombre black of the gentlemen standing on the other. The lights, and the masses of color, and the numerous familiar faces, swam round and round the half fainting maiden, when on her knees she received a small silver cross with her left hand, and a lighted taper with her right.

"Do not become a nun. Do not go into a cloister. Do not leave me!" implored, in tender accents, an infantine

voice from the crowd. It was her youngest sister, whose cries had been stifled by a handkerchief pressed over her loving lips, and whose little figure was lost behind clouds of incense. The bride, quite unnerved by this affecting incident, and her four noble bridesmaids, knelt once more, and this time near the great altar. A gorgeously clad priest handed a silver basin and a pair of scissors to the vicar, who cut off a lock of her hair. A walk through the church, preceded by the clamorous strains of the band, with eyes blinded by tears, confused entreaties by the nuns to cease weeping, lest it be thought her inclinations had been forced, a passage through assembled crowds, and Enrichetta was hustled into a corner of the visitors' room and stripped of her finery, even to the smallest article. Her despairing countenance caused murmurs of compassion among the spectators, when she appeared in the black habit, her new costume. The vicar then blessed the scapulary he placed upon her, and she bowed to the Abbess—no longer her kinswoman, yet still a Caracciolo—who uplifted a huge pair of scissors and seized her hair, braided into one heavy tress.

"Barbarians, spare her locks," shouted a powerful voice among the guests. "A madman!" it was whispered. The stranger was an English member of parliament. The priests ordered silence, and the nuns exclaimed, "He is a heretic—proceed."

The tress fell.

The year of novitiate expired. The dowry required from the bride of Him who said—"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God," was provided by a kind relative, and the cupidity of priests, acolytes, and nuns was satisfied by ample gifts and fees.

Sister Enrichetta had punctually followed the customary preparatory spiritual exercises, being assured that profession was like baptism, so that a nun dying immediately after taking the vows would proceed straightway to Paradise, without the disagreeable necessity of halting in purgatory. We may add here, that there was in the convent a magnificent marble staircase, which was ascended every Friday during March, by the whole community, from the Abbess to the lowest

scullery-maid, on their knees, a prayer being recited over each step, and an indulgence thereby obtained. Thus by cumulative indulgences would be purged any peccadilloes, any microscopic specks that may have oozed through the filters of confession and of profession, and an extra opportunity afforded to the faithful of literally stepping up to heaven.

On the 1st of October, 1842, before a numerous assemblage of distinguished guests, Enrichetta Caracciolo pronounced the vows of Chastity, Poverty, Obedience, and Perpetual Reclusion. After signing a Latin document, she was enjoined to lie upon a carpet on the floor, and a funeral pall was thrown over her, whilst from each corner a torch shed a lurid glare. The bells tolled, and lugubrious wailing from the church cast a solemn gloom on the scene around, as the officiating cardinal thrice pronounced the words "*Surge que dormis et exurge a mortuis et illuminabit te Christus.*" At the first invocation the nuns removed the cloth. At the second and third the victim rose gradually to the new life, to her worse than death. Communion, and a short sermon followed, and then kisses among the sisterhood, flavored with sweetmeats and ices.

When Enrichetta presented, according to custom, bouquets of artificial flowers to the cardinal and to the bishop, she offered another to a prince of the House of Denmark, who had accompanied her kinsman, General Salluzzi.

"Dead leaves from a dead woman!" exclaimed the general.

"The holocaust is completed," replied his royal highness. "The lamb is immolated. The sight is too painful. Let us depart."

Sister Enrichetta lived a life apart from the rest of the community, with whom she was as little at home as a Belgravian dandy among Neapolitan brigands, as Mr. Whalley amongst the company of Jesus, as a total abstinence preacher amid the drunken sailors of Ratcliff. Soon she was thoroughly disliked, because though with them she was not of them; their ways were not her ways, and what she valued and regarded, they feared and abhorred; what they cherished and revered, she despised and detested. However, she was a woman after the surly lexicographer's own

heart, and unquestionably she was a good hater, for she did not dip her pen in rose water. But her pictures of conventual life resemble daguerreotype portraits: they reflect Nature, though often in dark ghastly tints—Nature as seen through a pair of blue spectacles.

Now for her experiences. We will not dwell on the described relations between the brides of Christ and his ministers, an account of which would neither point a moral nor adorn a tale, unless it were one of Boëceio. That confession is good for the soul seems to have been an established axiom at St. Gregory. Confession formed the business, the pleasure, the recreation, and the joy of the sisters' lives. Nay, the fair writer even avers that the abolition of that practice would have been a deathblow to nunneries, all inducements to taking the veil at once ceasing with it, whilst with reference to the priests, their occupation, like Othello's, would be gone. The father confessor was the object of the heartburnings, rivalries, jealousies, and quarrels of the nuns. To him they confided their thoughts, hopes, fears, wishes, and aspirations. He was their spiritual director, friend, counsellor, father, mother, brother; the representative of and mediator to heaven. He inspired passionate worship, and this feeling so identified them with the cloister, that during temporary visits to their relatives, where it naturally could not have full scope, they would pine and long to return to their sweet captivity. Those whose ordinary confessor had fallen into the sere and yellow leaf would enlist the services of a younger religious guide, with whom they would confer for hours in a roomy and comfortable confessional. Some were ill with alarming frequency, and then they had the benefit of the uninterrupted ministrations of the priest in the privacy of their chambers. One holy sister daily summoned her confessor in the mornings to relate her thoughts of the night, to the accompaniment of wine and cakes; in the afternoons he returned to confession and to luncheon; in the evenings he reappeared to hear how she spent her mornings, and to sip coffee and munch sweetmeats. Moreover, unable to bear prolonged absences, Abelard and Heloise would exchange epistles twice in the twenty-four hours. By the way, some

of the letters of the pupils to their saintly masters, accidentally intercepted, were conceived in a style more suitable to devotees to our Lady of Lorette, than to followers of the Rule of St. Benedict.

Another sister had remained faithful for sixteen years to her confessor, from whom she had been parted; when eventually he was restored to her, she offered lights and flowers to her protecting saint, entertained the whole community to refreshments, received congratulatory madrigals, and built a private confessional, so as to be enabled at all hours to listen to his teachings.

But enough instances. How the overwhelming influence of the ministers of Christ was used and abused; how artful sophistry gradually sapped innocence and purity, how superstition and vice triumphed in the place of religion and virtue, how corruption spread and devoured the vitals of the establishment, will be found fully described in the work in question.

Sister Enrichetta did not escape the persecutions of gay ecclesiastics. These merely became marks for the shafts of her keen wit, but the dogma of vicarious love that a coward Don Juan endeavored to instil into her mind. . . . Quod Deus est amor, nec colitur nisi amando. . . . was repudiated with disgust and indignation, and all the blandishments of the black-gowned serpents served only to intensify her hatred against them.

"Come, ye blessed of my father. . . . I was sick and ye visited me, I was in prison and ye came unto me. . . . Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. . . . Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." So preached the Master; so practised not those who professed to be his servants. Let us quote a few examples of how charity was understood at St. Gregory the Armonian.

It was customary there to have the dead laid out on the floor by special attendants. On a certain occasion, the she-wolf whose duty it was to officiate, unwillingly rising from her warm bed when pressed by Sister Enrichetta, rushed at the corpse like a savage bull at a banderillo, tearing it down by the leg and dragging it across the apartment, shouting, "By the Madonna, could you

not have done it yourself?" Enrichetta's blood curdled in her veins at the repeated bumps of the poor cold head against the hard stones. Complaints were useless. They all acted likewise, said the Abbess. The same woman, tired of leading on Sundays a blind sister to mass, one day precipitated the troublesome being who could not see from the height of a steep staircase, and silenced her voice for ever. No punishment followed this deed, but on the other hand, a serving woman who assisted a lady visitor who had fallen in a fit, was soundly rated for meddling with what did not concern her.

This reminds us of an anecdote related by the late Marquis d'Azeglio. A gardener in the service of Pope Gregory XVI., surprised on some occasion at the unusual silence within, gradually advanced from the Belvedere Gardens into the antechamber, and crossing several halls, all of them perfectly deserted, reached at last a vast bedchamber. On a couch lay the vicar of Christ on earth, his head drooping over the side, whilst the cadaverous hue of his countenance, his sunken eyes, and the rattle in his throat, indicated that he was on the point of being summoned to render an account of his ministration. The soft-hearted gardener rushed to assist the moribund; but a priest unexpectedly appeared, and stayed the outstretched hand of mercy, under pain of excommunication. So his Holiness perished like the sorriest cur in his capital, and in point of humanity St. Peter equalled St. Gregory.

A hasty interment in the morning seems to have been the fate of the departed at our nunnery, and woe to the cook if the macaroni were overdone. Family ties were unknown to its inmates, and domestic affection was as great a stranger to them as Greek verse to a Red Indian. Two nuns, sisters of a princely family, were repeating their orations in the choir, measuring the time with the clepsydra as of old, when the suicide of a brother, a distinguished diplomatist, was suddenly announced to them. They looked at each other: "Anna!" said the one; "Camilla," replied the other, "May the Lord preserve him in glory. The water is flowing. Let us resume our meditations."

Another recluse, on being informed of

the unexpected decease of a sister, en-joined her serving woman not to communicate the news officially until the conclusion of the repast then commencing, for "she was starving, and would not remain dinnerless for the loss of any human being." The only creature that exhibited feeling about St. Gregory—for he was not allowed to enter—was a quadruped. When his young mistress, at the age of twelve, was immured for life, the faithful mastiff remained wailing pitifully, waiting for her return. For forty-eight hours he shivered on the marble pavement of the portico, giving vent to lamentations that would have softened the heart of any but priest or nun. The neighbors fed him, until he was poisoned by orders of the community, before the living tomb of her he had so well loved.

The exalted Preceptor of lowly fishermen said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. . . Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" But our nuns evidently differed. They resembled not St. Francis, who held the good things of this world in detestation, and who would never allow his followers to touch coin; nor like St. Philip Neri, who would frequently pray that he might become in need of a penny and find no one to give it. If the holy sisters wore coarse wool instead of purple, they also wore the finest of embroidered linens. If they were not allowed backs to their bedsteads, they at least owned the softest of feather beds and pillows, and the most luxurious of coverlets trimmed with point lace. If they might not have objects of ornament on their dressing-tables, they were not prohibited from keeping precious vessels and valuable porcelain in cabinets. If they retained no cash in their chambers, there was in the establishment a strong room where each bride of Christ held her own money under lock and key—a most needful practice, by the way, as will be presently seen. Moreover, the cuisine was excellent, and when they did not partake of fresh fruit, as on Fridays, the rules did not prevent their indulging *ad libitum* in preserves.

Each sister was wont to feast sumptuously the day of her protecting saint. Weeks of preparations and considerable

sums were wasted for and on these occasions, debts being freely incurred, and profuse gifts distributed to priests, monks, and acolytes. As these practices were followed on birth days, at Easter, and at Christmas, Castle Squander must have been a pattern of economy to St. Gregory. Each nunnery was famed for one description of comfit or cake, which was produced in considerable quantities, the daintiest morsels being reserved for their reverences, whilst the more imperfect saccharine compounds were good enough for their friends, and the most imperfect for the public, who paid handsomely for them. Moreover, there was a pharmacy in the convent, where several medications were prepared, and eagerly purchased by the Neapolitans—who had faith in their curative powers—at something like four times their cost.

Once a preacher who happened to be both honest and bold—a very Père Ilyacinthe—had the temerity to pass severe comments on the mode of life led by our nuns. “Was he aware he was addressing the daughters of dukes, princes, counts, and barons, the representatives of the *sangre azul* of Parthenope, the meanest of whom could show her sixteen quarterings?” angrily sent to inquire the Abbess. The ecclesiastic’s only reply was a repetition in his next homily of the insolent communication, word for word, to the utter confusion of the haughty dame.

Those scions of proud lineages appear to have been as well informed as Hottentots, and as literate as natives of New Guinea. One day, Mad. Caracciolo, who had often been taken to task for perusing profane books, was surprised reading by the Abbess. She uneasily handed the book, anticipating a reprimand, and was infinitely relieved at hearing, “Oh, the memoirs of St. Helena, the pious mother of St. Constantine—poor girl, you have been indeed maligned.” It was the *Mémorial de St. Hélène*, and the worthy mother had never heard of the existence of the obscure individual known as Napoleon Bonaparte.

Monotonousness of existence, want of active occupation, religious exaltation, and lack of healthy exercise for mind and body, caused their natural consequences. Nervous diseases, from fits, convulsions, catalepsy, to hallucinations, aberration of mind, and acute mania, were prevalent at St. Gregory, and

cases of suicide were by no means infrequent. Moreover, many of the sisters suffered from singular idiosyncrasies. One could not bear the touch of paper, and her attendant—purposely chosen from her inability to read or write—would turn the pages of her mistress’s missal, and hold her letters before her. Another sister swooned whenever she heard mass, a third would play with dolls, and a fourth, whenever indisposed, would pin herself in her couch. Want of space prevents us from even alluding to the numerous affecting incidents recorded in the book on this subject, clearly demonstrating that the laws of nature cannot be infringed with impunity.

The eighth commandment, or, indeed, for the matter of that, most others, seems to have been as thoroughly ignored, as if it had been enjoined in the Koran, the Zend-Avesta, or the Vedas. The Cave of Trophonius; Hounslow Heath, when Claude Duval, or Gentleman Jack, politely stopped travelers; the old rookery, when the late Mr. Fagan patiently devoted several hours daily to the instruction of promising pupils—were localities in which, comparatively to St. Gregory, the rights of property were respected. Provisions, relics, wearing apparel, lace, silver spoons, and sums of money, were constantly disappearing in the clutches of the light-fingered camorrists of the convent. Once the Blessed Virgin herself was stripped of the rings, bracelets, chains, and jewels heaped upon her by the faithful. This sacrilege caused a great sensation. The vicar severely admonished the assembled community, excommunicating the culprit. Some wept, some laughed, but the thief remained undetected. Six ducats were found at the foot of the shrine one day, and it was thought that the criminal, tormented by the pangs of conscience, would make restitution by small instalments, but pursuit having slackened, the delinquent’s good intentions, if ever formed, evidently went to pave the well-known warm locality. Our heroine herself, not indulging in the favorite habit, was constrained to keep under lock and key even the most trifling articles; otherwise her worldly goods would soon have been reduced to what she could grasp in her hand, having, as it was, lost some valuable property.

Sister Enrichetta, wearied of devout Catholics, who were as moral as Negroes, as honest as Otaheitans, as high principled as Malays, and somewhat less feeling than Laplanders; tired of a paradise which resembled a pandemonium, and of saints who were worse than sinners, commenced employing the energies of a strong nature, and the influence of powerful friends, to procure her release from the hated thralldom.

Cardinal Riario Sforza, a young man of few attainments in all except profligacy, had been by special favor created Archbishop of Naples, by Gregory XVI., shortly before his death. His Eminence conceived a great interest for the community of St. Gregory in general, and for Sister Enrichetta in particular.

He opened the campaign by the present of a huge basket of strawberries to the fair recluses, and on the following day a wag brought, in his name, to the convent, a monstrous sturgeon, soon discovered, to the horror of all, to be a common seal. The cardinal's gifts ceased, but not his visits. One day Signora Caracciolo was summoned to the visitor's room. The dandified, be-scented, be-jewelled representative of the apostles was loling on an easy chair. As habitual with him, he affected witticisms, and was offensive, and in striving to be Marforio, he was only Pulcinella. He informed the kneeling Enrichetta, who was pale with expectation, that her application to His Holiness had been referred to him; he pooh-poohed her plea of ill-health,—she was only hysterical; he sneered at her disinclination to conventual life, and with sundry insulting allusions, placed his veto to her request.

Discouragement was succeeded by renewed exertions; but all her petitions had but one termination, the defendant being appointed judge in his own case. Meanwhile, the cardinal vainly endeavored to win her regard, and to reconcile her to her position, even descanting on the beauties of the establishment. Our shorn lamb, however, was quite able to hold her own against the whole sacred college, and her sharp tongue did not spare her saintly admirer, to whom she refused the very moderate favor of a dish of sweetmeats. She hated him, and all the priests—and he continued for some time her adorer and her enemy,

until tired of being the former he remained only the latter.

Dawn appeared in 1848, and for a brief period the sun of liberty beamed on fair Parthenope. But Bomba swore to the new constitution only to forswear himself, and his promises culminated in shells, cannon balls, and fire. Where he had scourged with rods he now scourged with scorpions, and a reign of terror followed, in which military executions, crowded ergastoli, a gagged press, and a licentious, all-powerful police, testified to the love of Ferdinand for his subjects. Sister Enrichetta, whose liberal tendencies and sympathies were too well known, became the object of the sarcasms, of the sorry jests of the daughters of St. Benedict, strenuous supporters of the king's paternal government, until, almost driven to distraction, the proud-spirited, patriotic woman felt at times almost tempted to commit the nunnery to the flames, and to destroy herself and the malignant drones it sheltered. Only one faithful companion she possessed, an attached serving-maid, who devoted to her the unswerving affection of a humble and yet true heart, and who ever followed her in joy and in sorrow.

At last, one day, a venerable Capuchin brought Sister Enrichetta what was more precious than manna, more coveted than the Sangrail. It was a brief from his holiness, not releasing her from her vows, it is true, but yet permitting her to quit St. Gregory the Armenian, and to reside in a retreat of her own choice, issuing from it daily, provided she returned thereto nightly. The change of cage was not effected without difficulty, for when Pontius Pilatus inquired of Caiaphas—when abbess referred to abbess for the postulant's *character*,—praise qualified by the terrible accusation that she read the journals of the wicked, *i. e.*, the liberals, who contemplated the atrocious design of abolishing religious orders, was the reply, and of course the application was rejected. Pressure applied upon her unforgiving enemy, Cardinal Riario Sforza, obtained the desired effect, and Sister Enrichetta, after nine years' sufferings at St. Gregory the Armenian, was admitted into the Conservatory of Constantinople.

The new establishment was a spacious, light and cheerful building, situated in

one of the busiest thoroughfares of Naples, and Enrichetta's heart at first expanded, for the air seemed purer, the sun brighter, life more smiling, and once more she mixed with the men and women of the world she loved. But joy was short-lived. She shocked the abbess by purchasing a piano, and playing an overture to *Guglielmo Tell*. She scandalized the female porter by her daily exits. The fourteen oblate sisters of the nunnery were divided into parties, hating each other, and as she did not join any of them, she gained the ill-will of all. Moreover, her persecutor was at work, and her walks were changed into drives, and these soon were interdicted altogether. Her mother's journey to Gaeta, to obtain at the feet of his holiness a dispensation from the vows, failed. Further, she heard that all the rigors of claustral reclusion were about being enforced against her, the pill to be gilded by the offer of an abbess-ship. Lastly, to give the finishing stroke to her miseries, the allowance she was entitled to from St. Gregory was first reduced, and then altogether withdrawn. Unable to remain in that bed of Procrustes, she had recourse to desperate means. She fled, with her faithful attendant.

His Eminence was aghast, and in vain sent canon and priest to entreat Signora Caracciolo to return to the fold. She was obdurate, and defied them all. Whilst consultations were taking place between the ministers of heaven and the satellites of Bomba, as to the best means of recovering the strayed sheep, she took refuge at Capua, under the protection of Cardinal Capano, in a kind of asylum principally inhabited by Magdalens, undergoing the process of reformation. To live with a few oblate sisters under the same roof as three hundred shameless, brazen trulls, was not pleasant, nevertheless safety was insured, and Riario Sforza baffled. But the benevolent Cardinal Capano died, and Sister Enrichetta returned to Naples, where she sojourned unmolested for several months, until one day her apartments were invaded by the gigantic figure of Duke Morbilli, the chief Commissary of Police, accompanied by a sallow, hypocritical-looking priest, and a posse of *shirri* enough to have stormed a forest full of brigands, and she was hurried away she knew not whither.

After a year and a half of freedom, of

life, the imprisonment, the solitude, the silence fell heavy upon her. When she ascertained that she was in the Retreat of Santa Maria delle Crazie di Mondragone, a religious House of Correction, when she beheld her narrow cell, the only articles of furniture in which were a bedstead, a table, and a candlestick, when she heard that books and writing implements were forbidden to her, and that there was no hope of release, she fell into a deadly swoon. Fits of fury followed each other, and alarmed her clerical captors, and doubtless when she said she was ready to become a tiger, and to spring at their throats, they found small difficulty in believing her. She determined upon starving herself to death, and after remaining six days without food, the physician summoned found her suffering from a nervo-bilious fever, accompanied by symptoms of cerebral congestion. On the eleventh day of her voluntary abstinence, she was sinking, and her life was only saved by the pious fraud of the doctor, who assured her her liberation had been ordered, and by his unremitting attention for some time afterwards.

The strenuous efforts of her relatives and friends to procure a termination of her captivity failed; the king and his ministers asserting that Signora Caracciolo had been leagued with conspirators and revolutionists. The suspicions of the police were not unfounded, for she loved her country, detested its misgovernors, and silently worked to assist in its redemption.

But no proofs against her were ever found; her chattels and wearing apparel were only searched, to leave undetected what she most prized, and her unsuspected correspondence was continued until the end.

How Enrichetta Caracciolo was restored to society after a duration of three years and a half, how Garibaldi rent asunder the hated fetters that had enslaved her for twenty years; how a new government closed the hot-beds of idleness, ignorance, fanaticism, and sin, where she had wasted the best portion of her existence; how, finally, she became a happy wife and fond mother, may be discovered, with many other interesting details, faithfully, simply, yet vividly and graphically depicted in her Memoirs.

JAMES PICCIOTTI.

A ROMANCE OF THE CLOISTER.

BY MRS. H. E. EVERETT.

‘YES, I will; I will take the veil! I will profess at the *Sacré Cœur*, and there, amid those sacred scenes, I shall be free from the taunts of my cousin and the reluctant bounty of my aunt. Alas! why was I born to this! Oh, Holy VIRGIN! give me grace to imitate THEE in thy fortitude under affliction!’

Thus soliloquized Rose de Biragues as she sat in her little room, her hand resting upon the open page of her diary, where she had just recorded a detailed account of slights and insults innumerable, which for many a weary day she had received at the hands of her aunt and cousin.

Rose de Biragues was the orphan-niece of Madame de Férolles, the widow of a rich banker, residing a short distance from Caen, one of the largest and most flourishing towns in ‘La Belle Normandie.’ Louis de Biragues, the father of Rose, and the only brother of Madame de Férolles, displeased his worldly and ambitious sister by marrying early in life a charming girl, with no dower but her beauty. For two years he led a life of unalloyed happiness; but ere the third anniversary of their blissful union he was called upon to mourn the early death of his beloved wife, which left him inconsolable. Not even the newly-awakened tenderness of a father’s love could arouse him from his despondency, and in a few months the sod of the parish church-yard was once more upturned to make room for him beside his wife. He bequeathed the infant Rose to Madame de Férolles, begging her to remember that she was the child of the brother she had once fondly loved, and do by her as she would by her own; but time had long since weakened Madame de Férolles’ early love for Louis, and she only remembered that the infant committed to her care was the child of the despised Rose Deville.

But in spite of neglect and want of affection, Rose de Biragues grew to womanhood, and promised to be as beautiful as her cousin Marie de Férolles was plain and gauche. Many were the slights the poor girl would have to endure, as a casual comparison, drawn by some unprejudiced person between the merits of the two cousins, would reach the ears of Madame de Férolles; and so continued were the annoyances, that at last the poor girl in desperation determined to take the veil. Marie de Férolles and her mother both highly approved of Rose’s resolution, and never were they so kind as when assisting her to prepare for the eventful step which would relieve them of her forever.

It was now winter, and it was decided that Rose should enter as Vostulante until after Christmas, when she was to make her profession as novice. It was the day before the celebration of that great feast of the Nativity, which brings forth in all its glory the almost imperial splendor of the Catholic church, that Rose de Biragues entered as an

inmate of the convent; and although a Catholic from her birth, she had never seen any greater display than was exhibited at the parish church. Judge then of her emotion when she entered the superb establishment where dwelt *Les dames du Sacré Cœur de Jésus*. The convent, formerly a palace of the ancient régime, was in the form of a hollow square, the building extending round three sides of a court, paved with tessellated green and white marble, in the centre of which a sparkling fountain scattered its waters from the graceful bells of a branch of the Egyptian Lotus, held by a sea-nymph. The porters at the gate received the young girl, and led her through an arched cloister to a suite of six rooms, each larger than the other. The walls had formerly been decorated with superb mirrors, and finished landscapes filled up the intermediate panels; but the piety of the nuns, and the strict laws of the convent, which forbids a glass of any kind throughout the establishment, had removed the mirrors, and caused the exquisite paintings to be covered with a preparation similar to the rest of the walls. But the white and gilded Louis Quatorze mouldings still left enough of beauty to dazzle even the sophisticated eye; and as the gaze of Rose de Biragues wandered from one vast *salon* to another, and still further, until through an immense bow-window she saw the highly cultivated grounds of the convent stretching afar off in the distance, she said to herself: 'How different from what I anticipated! Here there is nothing gloomy; and if the nuns are kind to me, I shall certainly be happy.' As she thus mused, a gentle voice fell upon her ear, and a soft 'Welcome, my daughter, to this abode of peace,' brought Rose in a moment to the feet of the Superior; and the 'Bless me, my mother!' which burst from her over-charged heart, spoke volumes. After an earnest benediction the Superior gently raised her, and seating her by her side, spoke to her of the high and holy vows she intended taking upon herself; of the peace that the world cannot give; and as Rose became subdued and tranquillized, she felt that it was a blessed thing that the treatment of her relatives had driven her to such a holy and peaceful asylum.

While still engaged in this conversation the bell sounded for the Angelus; and bidding Rose follow her, the Superior led the way through a lofty hall, whose arched ceiling was supported by twelve colossal pillars of pale green marble, forming a vestibule of rare beauty, to a cloistered corridor, which they entered, and in a few moments reached the chapel, which was already decorated for the midnight mass of Christmas Eve. The chapel was of dark oak, lighted by a dome of stained glass directly above the altar, whose white marble surface caught the last rays of the setting sun, as it fell in myriad gorgeous colors upon the golden candlesticks and the clustering flowers; and one glittering beam rested on the diamond wreath that encircled the *ostensoir*, which was that night to receive the miraculous wafer transformed into a real SAVIOUR.

While the nuns repeated the customary prayers, Rose could not refrain from looking about her. The convent was one of great wealth, and all the paraphernalia of the altar was superb; many of the pieces being presents from princesses of royal blood. Immediately behind

the altar was a magnificent picture, representing our SAVIOUR holding his sacred bleeding heart in hand, and hosts of saints and angels kneeling in adoration at the precious sight. The ever-burning alabaster lamp, filled with perfumed oil, shed a dim light upon the kneeling figures of the nuns, and the peaceful happy expression of their faces filled the soul of Rose with indescribably blissful emotions.

Week passed after week, each one finding Rose happier than the last. The tranquil, soothing atmosphere of all around, and the numerous religious duties that occupied her time, left not a moment for regret, and she prepared with alacrity for her profession as novice.

Shortly after she had taken the veil, it was thought expedient by the *Mère Générale* to make a transfer of nuns from the convent at Caen to the one of the same order at Rome, and the Sœur Marie Rose was among the number. Although the nuns kept much to themselves during their journey, still it was impossible to avoid occasional contact with their fellow travellers; and during their passage in the vessel from Marseilles to Leghorn, the exquisite embroidery, which was the daily employment of the nuns, attracted the passengers to their frames, and the elder ladies entered freely into conversation with both gentlemen and ladies. But among them was one who found that the sweet face of the young novice was far more attractive than the glittering embroidery which grew beneath her fair fingers, and each day found Alfred de Beaujeu forming one of the coterie that assembled round the nuns. Tall and eminently handsome, his dark eyes beaming with intelligence and sensibility, his manner deferential in the highest degree, his whole bearing was so prepossessing, that from captain to sailor, from old to young, he was a universal favorite. Sœur Thérèse, who was nearly seventy, and had never been accused of beauty, openly praised him, without any fear of her encomiums causing ill-natured remarks, and regretted that such a fine young man had not the vocation for a priest. And Rose, what did she think? Though her lips were silent, her eyes were eloquent, and the young man interpreted their language as he hoped. Not a word had they ever exchanged; never had they been for a moment alone; still they both felt and knew that they loved, and with both the realization of the fact afforded unutterable joy. To Rose the sensation was so perfectly novel, that she did not even feel that she was doing wrong; she was content to live upon the bliss of the present, and not think of the future. Indeed, a thought beyond the perfect Elysium of her present state never crossed her mind; the very fact of her not expressing it, deepened its intensity; but with De Beaujeu the joy of being beloved was chastened by doubt and sadness. Unlike Rose, he looked into the future; he longed to call her his own, his wife. But what! she was already the bride of the church, and a church jealous of its votaries. The voice of scandal would be raised, and in no Catholic country could they be even secure. Still he reflected as little as possible upon the dark side of the picture, trusting that something might occur which would point out some means of accomplishing his wishes. How devoutly he longed for a shipwreck! but wind and tide proved favorable, and they soon dropped anchor in the busy port of Leghorn. The nuns were here to take a private con-

veyance to Rome, and they were about to part! Could he let her go without a single word of farewell? No! he must express his feelings, and then mature his plans for gaining her for his wife.

As the four nuns stepped into the carriage that was to convey them on their journey, Alfred de Beaujeu approached with four superb bouquets, which he presented to the ladies as he made his adieux; and the three were so much occupied in admiring their own, and expatiating upon his politeness, (for nuns are but women,) that they failed to observe that the one held by the young novice was far more recherché and beautiful than their own; and Rose saw with a blushing cheek and fluttering heart the white corner of a note peeping from among the clustering leaves. The bouquets were still odorous, though somewhat faded, when they reached the Eternal City, and the moment she reached her cell, with failing fingers she unwound the blue ribbon, and read with tearful eyes and throbbing heart the first words of love. What bliss upon earth is comparable to this? The rapture of avowal is unutterable; but when we behold in tangible evidence the blissful fact, when we read and re-read the burning words, they seem graven upon our heart of hearts, and we feel that even the rose-leaf would o'erflow the cup of happiness.

CHAPTER SECOND.

‘HAVE you heard the news, Gaston?’ said a young exquisite to his friend, as they sipped an iced sherbet at Tortoni’s, ‘the *lionnes* and the *pantheres* are tempted to march on an embassy to the Holy Father, to petition him to forbid such perversion of talents. Good heavens! Alfred de Beaujeu a cowed priest!’

‘What!’ exclaimed Gaston de Montaign, starting to his feet, ‘Alfred de Beaujeu a priest! the richest, most distingué man in Paris; from the Faubourg St. Germain to the Chausée d’Antin, the man of all others the most admired! You surely are joking.’

‘Ma foi, no! I wish it were a joke; for, somehow, one was never jealous of de Beaujeu.’

‘But what is, what has been the cause? Has he lost his fortune? has Blanche de Courcy refused him?’

‘No, his fortune is as large as ever, and Blanche de Courcy would willingly be Blanche de Beaujeu! But he has written to Blanche, stating that he trusts she will not think it capricious or unkind in him refusing to fulfil the contract entered into by their parents, saying that as they have met but twice, he cannot flatter himself that she will feel any personal disappointment at his resolution to enter upon a priestly life, and settles upon her half his fortune; the rest is given to the Society of Jesus.’

‘But still there must be a cause. A man with all the personal and numerous other advantages of Alfred de Beaujeu, scarcely twenty-five years of age, would not be fool enough to resign them all to become a priest; and he was never a *devôt*!’

‘*Ecoutez*, Gaston, and I will tell you a private bit of scandal told me in confidence by de Brézé, who made a voyage from Marseilles to Leg-

horn, last year, with de Beaujeu. There was a party of nuns of the Sacré Cœur on board, and one of them de Brézé describes as the most beautiful creature he ever beheld: a complexion like the inner petals of the blush rose, eyes of heaven's own blue, and I know not what other extravagant similes he used; but, *enfin*, she was perfect; of a style totally different from Alfred; and, moreover, she had that purity and *fieuchœur*, so captivating to a man so much in the world as de Beaujeu. De Brézé declares the nun was as much bewitched as poor Alfred; and my private inference is, that de Beaujeu, finding it impossible to obtain a dispensation, or to induce the lady to break her vows, has determined to turn priest himself. You know whatever he undertook he pursued with his whole soul, and he has probably fallen in love with the same ardor.'

'Well, poor Alfred! these women do play the deuce with us. Adieu! I'm off to Fanny's. I suppose she will send me to the Morgue or la Trappe one of these days!'

The gay speculation of the young exquisite was correct. When Rose had somewhat recovered from the fascinating influence of de Beaujeu's letter, the words, 'Dearest Rose, I long to call you wife!' struck her in all their force. She, the bride of CHRIST, who had vowed to receive none but him for her bridegroom! She thought of the anathemas the Bishop had uttered against those who dishonored both the Church and themselves by receding from the paths of righteousness; of the aversion the nuns would feel toward her, did they but know of the letter she had received. The conflict was tremendous; and throwing herself before the statue of the VIRGIN that occupied a niche of her cell, she burst into a long and passionate flood of tears. Before she arose, her resolution was taken. She would banish him from her heart; he should be to her as though he had never existed. Could a love that caused her such unhappiness be equal to the religion that, before her fatal journey, had filled her with such joy and peace? Oh, no! She dedicated herself again to the Blessed Mother, and rose a suffering woman, with a crushed and broken heart. Months passed on, and more than once had Alfred contrived means to forward letters to her without the knowledge of the nuns, but with the resolution of a martyr she destroyed them without breaking the seal, and after each, applied herself more and more strenuously to her devotions. But the affections are the great support of life, and outraged Love will triumph even in the death of its victim! Constant austerities and continual suppression of every thought of Alfred wore upon the delicate frame of the lovely nun, and Consumption claimed her as his prey. Never, as yet, had Rose summoned sufficient resolution to narrate to her confessor the occurrences of her eventful journey; but now she felt that she was dying, that ere many weeks her name would be but a memory, and she felt she could die more calmly should she unburden her whole heart to her spiritual father. The gray pall of evening was setting over the horizon, when Rose, pale and emaciated, but still beautiful, entered the confessional. With choking voice she finished the '*miâ culpa*,' and proceeded to narrate the whole course of her feelings, from the time of her first meeting de Beaujeu; and so absorbed was

she with her own thoughts, that she did not notice the convulsive sobs that shook the confessional, as she described in eloquent words the intensity of her love for Alfred. She depicted her anguish at their separation, the struggle between desire and duty when she received the letters, and finished by praying that it might not impede her entrance into the heavenly world, that purified and holy it was still enshrined in her heart of hearts. As she paused for the benediction, overcome with the exertion, the door of the confessional suddenly opened, and raising her eyes, Rose uttered a shriek of surprise, and sank fainting in the arms of Alfred de Beaujeu ! Forgetting all else but that he held his beloved at last within his grasp, he lavished the caresses of affection upon her senseless form, begging that she would grant him but one look in the name of their long cherished love. His voice recalled the spirit from the verge of the unknown world. Opening her eyes, she fixed upon him a look of unutterable affection, murmured his name, and fell back heavily upon his arm — he gazed upon the dead ! Once more he saw her, dressed in bridal robes, the orange wreath fastening the veil that concealed her golden hair, the wedding ring upon her finger — all even as he had pictured in his airy visions, there she lay — the bride of Death !

The confessor of the convent (who had been unexpectedly called away, and requested the Superior of the Jesuits to send another brother in his place to the *Sacré Cœur*, which explained the opportune appearance of Alfred,) returned in time to perform the funeral service for the deceased nun, and none dreamed of the mighty agitation that swelled to bursting the heart of the priest who assisted him at the mournful ceremony, and no eye saw the look of intense love that, lingering, took its last fond farewell of the dead novice. The next day Father Alfred petitioned for a transfer to the order of *La Trappe*, and not a monk of that most severe of severe communities practises more unceasing austerities than Alfred de Beaujeu.

Trust me, gentle reader, many a romance lies hidden beneath the priestly cowl, and the smouldering embers of disappointed affection would oftentimes be found, were the heart of the cloistered nun laid bare to view.

A BROKEN HEARTED NUN.

The following affecting piece is taken from that valuable work of Blanco White, entitled "Evidences against Catholicism." It displays the distressing and awful effects of shutting up in a convent, innocence and beauty, on pretence of religion, in terms truly affecting. This is the case of but one, but we have reason to believe that hundreds, yea, thousands, like her, have lost both body and soul, by popish enthusiasm and popish tyranny; their bodies cast away, as it were, in this world, and their souls eternally ruined in the world to come. What cause have we to rejoice and give thanks to God, whilst we press our Bibles to our bosoms, and Christ to our hearts, that he has placed us in a land where his word alone can be the rule of faith; where no infallible Pope can tyrannise over our consciences, and render us miserable, both in time and eternity!

G.

"The eldest daughter of a family, intimately acquainted with mine, was brought up in the convent of Saint Agnes, at Seville, under the care of her sister, the abbess of that female community. The circumstances of the whole transaction were so public at Seville, and the subsequent judicial proceedings have given them such notoriety, that I do not feel bound to conceal names. Maria Francisca Barreiro, the unfortunate subject of this account, grew up a lively and interesting girl, in the convent; while a younger sister enjoyed the advantages of an education at home. The mother formed an early design of devoting her eldest daughter to religion, in order to give her less attractive favorite a better chance of getting a husband. The distant and harsh manner with which she constantly treated Maria Francisca, attached the unhappy girl to her aunt by the ties of the most ardent affection. The time, however, arrived, when it was necessary she should either leave her, and endure the consequences of her mother's aversion at home, or take the vows, and thus close the gates of the convent upon herself for ever. She preferred the latter course, and came out to pay the last visit to her friends. I met her, almost daily, at the house of one of her relatives, where her words and manners soon convinced me that she was a victim of her mother's designing and unfeeling disposition. The father was an excellent man, though timid and undecided. He feared his wife, and was in awe of the monks, who, as usual, were extremely anxious to increase the number of their female prisoners. Though I was aware of the dangers which a man incurs in Spain, who tries to dissuade a young woman from being a nun, humanity impelled me to speak seriously to the father, entreating him not to expose a beloved child to spend her life in hopeless regret for lost liberty. He was greatly moved by my reasons; but the impression I made was soon obliterated. The day for Maria Francisca's taking the veil, was at length fixed, and though I had a most pressing invitation to be present at the ceremony, I determined not to see the wretched victim at the altar. On the preceding day, I was called from my stall at the royal chapel, to the confessional. A lady, quite covered by her black veil, was kneeling at the grate through which females speak to the confessor. As soon as I took my seat, the well known voice of Maria Francisca made me start with surprise.—Bathed in tears, and scarcely able to speak without betraying her state to the people who knelt near the confessional, by the sobs which interrupted her words, she told me she wished only to unburden her heart to me, before she shut herself up for life. Assistance, she assured me, she would not receive; for rather than live with her mother, and endure the obloquy to which her swerving from

her announced determination would expose her, she "would risk the salvation of her soul." All my remonstrances were in vain. I offered to obtain the protection of the arch-bishop, and thereby to extricate her from the difficulties in which she was involved. She declined my offer, and appeared as resolute as she was wretched. The next morning she took the veil, and professed at the end of the following year. Her good aunt died soon after; and the nuns who had allured her into the convent by their caresses, when they perceived that she was not able to disguise her misery, and feared that the existence of a reluctant nun might by her means transpire, became her daily tormenters.

"After an absence of three years from Seville, I found that Maria Francisca had openly declared her aversion to a state, from which nothing but death could save her.—She often changed her confessors, expecting comfort from their advice. At last she found a friend in one of the companions of my youth; a man whose benevolence surpasses even the bright genius with which nature has gifted him; though neither has been able to exempt him from the evils to which Spaniards seem to be fated in proportion to their worth. He became her confessor, and in that capacity spoke to her daily. But what could he do against the inflexible tyranny in whose grasp she languished?

"About this time, the approach of Napoleon's army threw the town into a general consternation, and the convents were opened to such of the nuns as wished to fly.—Maria Francisca, whose parents were absent, put herself under the protection of a young prebendary of the cathedral, and by his means reached Cadiz, where I saw her on my way to England. I shall never forget the anguish with which, after a long conversation, wherein she disclosed to me the whole extent of her wretchedness, she exclaimed, *There is no hope for me!* and fell into convulsions.

"The liberty of Spain from the French invaders, was the signal for the fresh confinement of this helpless young woman to her former prison. Here she attempted to put an end to her sufferings, by throwing herself into a deep well, but was taken out alive. Her mother was now dead, and her friends instituted a suit of nullity of profession, before the ecclesiastical court. But the laws of the Council of Trent were positive, and she was cast in the trial. Her despair, however, exhausted the little strength which her protracted sufferings had left her, and the unhappy Maria Francisca died soon after, having scarcely reached her twenty-fifth year."

[Evangelical Lutheran Magazine.]

ACCOUNT OF A CONVENT OF URSULINE NUNS.

(From Mrs. Stothard's Letters, written during a late Tour through Normandy.)

WE were informed, (says this lively and intelligent traveller,) that the remains of the tombs of two Dukes of Brittany had been removed from the Carmelites to the convent of the Ursulines here; but as *no man* was permitted to pass within the walls, it would be impossible Mr. S—— could see them. He desired me therefore, to make the attempt, that I might give him some account of what they were. Accordingly I set out to obtain an interview with the abbess.

The court-yard of the convent appeared in a miserable and ruinous state; the chapel and building still exhibiting the marks of revolutionary destruction. The little grating at the door was concealed by a piece of tin, pierced with small holes, through which a sister demanded what I wanted. Upon expressing a desire to speak with the superior, the tin disappeared, and through the grating I perceived a dismal figure all in black, her face concealed by her veil, who directed me in what manner to proceed. Accordingly I found my way into a small room; there a pretty girl, attired in the dress of a novice, was teaching several dirty children to read. I was immediately conducted into another apartment, where an elderly female stood within the large iron grating to receive me. Her mild and agreeable countenance, united to a most pleasing address, relieved me from all embarrassment. I apologised for my intrusion, and explained the motives that induced it. She listened to me with politeness, and assured me, although it was against the rules of the house, that both myself and Mr. S. should be welcome to see the remains of the tombs that were now preserved within the cloisters of the convent. She extended her hand to me through the grating, and said that the English had given such a kind reception to the French during their distressing emigration, that she felt happy in the opportunity of obliging any individual of that nation.

I returned for Mr. S. and the mother

received us both in her parlour, where, as there was more light, with no iron bars between us, I had a full view of her person and dismal attire. The nun who acted as portress at the gate, joined the lady abbess, and paid us her compliments in very civil terms. The superior then conducted us to the cloisters, where the tombs of John, the first of that name, and John the Second, dukes of Brittany, and earls of Richmond, were preserved: the former duke had espoused Beatrice, a daughter of our Henry the Third; and the latter is interesting from being the effigy of that prince, who, leaving at his death the succession of the dukedom undetermined, occasioned those calamitous wars which so long afflicted this province. These effigies are of very fine sculpture, and in a perfect state. Mr. S. requested permission to make drawings from them; this was immediately granted; and the agreeable abbess invited me to pass my time at the convent while he was employed. I readily accepted her polite offer, and returned to the parlour. The abbess, after some conversation, expressed a wish to conduct me over the house, and to introduce me both to her nuns, and pretty novices, as she termed them. I could not help contrasting the manners of this amiable woman with those of the mother of Rennes; her conversation, entirely free from presumption or severity, evinced the pure and calm sentiments of a sincerely pious mind; her attention to the sisters appeared kind and parental, while their extreme respect and solicitude to obey her, proved how great an influence she had acquired by her benevolent and amiable manners; for there are no services so devoted, no rules so implicitly obeyed, as those to which the heart subscribes a willing and entire assent. I found the novices employed, some in teaching the boarders of the convent, assisted by a few of the nuns, and others embroidering muslins or silks. The novices wear the black dress, with a thick white cloth veil that hangs over

the head as low as the eye-brows; their hair is entirely concealed; and the white chin cloth, that is suspended round the ears, falls over the bosom. This costume is by no means becoming; a woman must be bordering on beautiful to look even tolerably well in it. The novices still retain their hair, although it is not seen; but on making profession, or taking the black veil, it is entirely cut off.

The sight of these young girls excited my compassion. At an age when the mind acts more from impulse than reflection, while they yet scarcely know in what situation their future happiness might be established or subverted, they were preparing an endless and cheerless imprisonment for the remainder of their days. One young woman particularly attracted my observation; she was so handsome and fair, that her complexion seemed almost as delicate as the veil she wore; her manner seemed simply engaging, and she was altogether so superior to her companions, that I could not resist begging the abbess to inform me the occasion of her being there. The superior told me she was the child of most respectable parents, who carefully superintended her education, with the assistance of the family director or priest; that the young lady for some time devoted her attention to the acquirements of literature and science, but being suddenly struck with a powerful conviction of the brevity of human life, and the importance of eternity, she determined, notwithstanding every opposition, to renounce the world. Her parents, greatly distressed by her resolution, for a considerable time endeavoured to combat it; but finding their efforts vain, at the age of seventeen, they had resigned their child to seclusion. We quitted the novices, and visited the cells; every nun had a little apartment to herself; a bed, a table, bearing a crucifix, and a chair, constituted the furniture of each. I was soon introduced to all the sisters, whose curiosity to see a being belonging to the world, and of a foreign country, brought them eagerly around me. I endeavoured to please them by satisfying their inqui-

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ries relative to my own country, and what was doing in the world; they were extremely anxious to know if Bonaparte lived secure, and feared his returning to France: they made me describe St. Helena, and the manner in which the ex-emperor lived. They expressed themselves pleased with the accounts I gave, and were anxious to show me civilities. An elderly nun requested I would allow the boarders of the convent to pay their respects to the English lady, as they had never seen any one of that nation in Ploermel. Accordingly, several country girls came into the room, and all pressed round me; some seated themselves upon the floor, the better to gaze at so strange a being, and seemed as much struck with wonder, as if I had fallen from the moon; while their extreme simplicity and ignorance equally amused me.

I was next conducted into the dining-hall. The abbess's table stood alone at the upper end of the room; the nuns were seated at long tables on either side; and during their scanty and frugal repast, a nun, appointed for the duty by the lady abbess, preached an extempore sermon on the joys of the heavenly world.

After dinner, I attended the superior into her own cell, where she informed me the brief story of her life. At the age of eighteen she became disgusted with the world, from a very severe disappointment, that too frequently wounds a susceptible mind; and resolving to seek, in the hopes of futurity, that happiness she could no longer find in society, she devoted herself to a monastic life. When the revolution broke out, she was persecuted with the rest of her order; and having escaped the destruction that threatened her, she took refuge with her own family in a distant part of France. Tranquillity once more restored, her friends endeavoured to persuade her to remain with them; but time, that great physician to afflictions, had taught her to consider her sorrows as instrumental to her ultimate good: she returned to her seclusion, and those few nuns who had escaped the common danger, followed her example. They found their convent desolated, and exerted their utmost

means in repairing it; but poverty prevented their doing much towards rendering their habitation either handsome or comfortable. The abbess well described their distressed condition, but remarked such sufferings were nothing for the espoused of Christ.

We then walked towards the chapel. It was not the hour of general prayer, but several nuns were kneeling on the ground absorbed in deep meditation, before an image of our Saviour upon the cross, that hung suspended from the roof. The abbess devoutly crossed herself with holy water; and having prayed for a few minutes before the figure of the Virgin, quitted the chapel. Whilst we were proceeding to the parlour, I offered the mother some fine flowers I had in my bosom; but she declined them, saying, with a serious air, "We never take such things:" and I found they were considered by devotees as one of the vanities of this world, although the beautiful productions of that Almighty Being to whom they themselves dedicate their lives. We returned to the parlour, where the abbess apologised for leaving me, but expressed her hopes that I should find an agreeable companion in Maria Theresa, whose turn it was to act as portress, an office that prevented her attendance in the chapel.

Maria Theresa I found a very intelligent, good-natured young woman. We had no sort of reserve, and soon entered into familiar conversation. As a gossip with a nun is by no means common in England, you may feel some curiosity to hear a little of our discourse; and as the religious opinions of Maria are, I believe, like those received in all convents, I need not detail them at length. I begged Maria to permit me to sketch her costume. She consented if the mother would allow it. The good-natured nun gained the necessary leave, on condition I would draw only the dress, without copying her face. To this I consented, and, after adjusting her drapery, commenced my work.

Our conferences were exclusively confined to the discussion of doctrinal points of faith, on which the nun displayed more acuteness than might have been expected in the enslaved state of her mind. During our conversation

the abbess entered, but the bell again sounding for orisons, she left us her hope that God would yet unfold to me the truth, and reclaim me from my errors. Maria explained to me the custom of orisons, or the assembling of the nuns, to think or pray whatever the Divine Power suggests: she also informed me that the sisters rise at four in the morning to say matins, and perform divine service. Several times during the day Maria endeavoured to entertain, by shewing me some large folios, containing the lives and miracles of several score of modern saints, the only books besides those of prayer which the sisters are allowed to read. She related to me the history of a nun living in a convent near Vannes, in the south of France, who is called a saint elect, but whose adventures appeared very melancholy to me. She was the daughter of a noble family, who consented to give her in marriage to a young gentleman greatly attached to her. A short time before the appointed nuptials, her father died, and her mother survived his decease but a few days. The young lady, considering this as a warning from heaven, that her marriage was averse to the will of God, became melancholy, and believing herself chosen as a spouse of Christ, determined upon taking the veil. Her lover, disappointed in all his hopes, declared, that if the lady became a nun, he would not survive her loss. She persisted in her design, notwithstanding her own affection, and his melancholy state of mind, and the unfortunate man, in a fit of despondency, put a period to his existence. The nun, far from feeling any regret on the subject, gloried in having resigned all her hopes by devoting herself to God, and at present bears the reputation of a saint, from wearing the hair shirt to fret her skin, and practising every kind of austerity.

The abbess very freely permitted Mr. S. to converse with any of the old or superannuated nuns, but the good lady was too cautious to extend this kind privilege to the younger sisters, or to the novices, fearing, I imagine, the very sight of a young man might make them dream of the world again; a caution they would willingly have dispensed with, as they did not fail gratifying

their curiosity by taking a peep from behind the columns of the cloister during the time he was employed.

We visited the convent again yesterday, and I requested the abbess to permit me to accompany her to the chapel; she seemed both pleased and surprised at my request. The abbess conducted me into the chapel, where we found the nuns already assembled. She placed me near her in the choir, and whispered in my ear, as she knelt down, "May God touch your heart, and make you like one of us."

The large black curtain that covered the grating and concealed the nuns from the view of the congregation in the church, was then drawn back. The altar, where the priest officiated, stood without the grating. The nuns seated themselves in richly carved oaken stalls, on either side of the choir; and the novices, covered with their long white veils, sat on low benches in front of the sisters. Two of these young girls, accompanied by an elderly nun, slowly advanced into the centre of the aisle, and after humbly prostrating themselves before the suspended crucifix, they turned towards the altar, and commen-

ced the service, chaunting, in notes of pathetic melody, a hymn to the Virgin. During the office they frequently bent their bodies towards the earth, and sometimes remained several minutes in that position. The sound of a bell proclaimed the elevation of the host, when the whole sisterhood fell upon their knees, with every token of the deepest reverence and humiliation. Several even threw themselves upon the ground, as if overpowered by the splendour of some mental vision of divinity. Whenever any of the sisterhood crossed the choir, they invariably fell upon their knees, before the image of the crucifixion. I have seen mass performed with more pageantry, but never, I think, with so much solemnity, as at this convent of Ursuline nuns. The whole ceremony was characterised by a grandeur and awful dignity, very imposing, and calculated to inspire a serious feeling in the most unthinking mind; while the youth and beauty of several of the novices awakened a sense of compassion for their melancholy life, whose innocence and purity thus prostrated before the throne of mercy, gave an additional interest to the solemnity of their devotion

CONVENT DISCIPLINE.

We lately published an extract from Madame Calderon's interesting work on Mexico, descriptive of the ceremony of taking the veil. Our readers will not wonder that the scene excited commiseration, when they read the following account of the interior discipline of another Convent which Madame C. visited. As we have before mentioned, the position of Mad. Calderon afforded her very favorable opportunities of witnessing scenes and customs which are never exposed to the eye of ordinary travellers, or even residents of Mexico. This position—arising from the official character of her distinguished husband—was to her a perfect "Open sesame!" in every quarter. She had permission from the Archbishop to visit the Convent of Santa Teresa, accompanied by one young married lady, who had a sister there. The Archbishop desired that the visit should be kept a secret, but she says it somehow oozed out, and exposed her to a veto on future applications. The Santa Teresa has twenty-one nuns. Mad. C. was also accompanied by a bishop, a young man, splendidly dressed. His robes were of purple satin, covered with fine point lace, with a large cross of diamonds and amethyst. He also wore a cloak of very fine purple cloth, lined with crimson velvet—crimson stockings, and an immense amethyst ring. When the bishop came in, Mad. C. says:—

"We found that the nuns had permission to put up their veils, rarely allowed in this order in the presence of strangers. They have a small garden and fountain, plenty of flowers, and some fruit; but all is on a smaller scale, and sadder, than in the Convent of the Incarnation. The refectory is a large room with a long narrow table running all around it; a plain deal table with wooden benches; before the place of each nun, an earthen bowl, an earthen cup with an apple in it, a wooden plate and a wooden spoon;—at the top of the table a grinning skull, to remind them that even these indulgences they shall not long enjoy.

"In one corner of the room is a reading desk, a sort of elevated pulpit, where one reads aloud from some holy book, whilst the others discuss their simple fare. They showed us a crown of thorns which, on certain days, is worn by one of their number, by way of penance. It is made of iron, so that the nails entering inwards, run into the head, and make it bleed. While she wears this on her head a sort of wooden bit is put into her mouth, and she lies prostrate on her face till dinner is ended; and while in this condition her food is given her, of which she eats as much as she can, which probably is none.

"We visited the different cells, and were horror-struck at the self-inflicted tortures. Each bed consists of a wooden plank raised in the middle, and on days of penitence, crossed by wooden bars. The pillow is wooden, with a cross lying on it, which they hold in their hands when they lie down. The nun lies on this penitential couch, embracing the cross, and her feet hanging out; as the bed is made too short for her upon principle. Round her waist she occasionally wears a band with iron points turning inwards; on her breast a cross with nails, of which the points enter the flesh, of the truth of which I had melancholy ocular demonstration. Then, after having scourged herself with a whip covered with iron nails, she lies down for a few hours on the wooden bars, and rises at four o'clock. All these instruments of discipline, which each nun keeps in a little box beside her bed, look as if their fitting place would be in the dungeons of the Inquisition.—They made me try their *bed and board*, which I told them would give me a very decided taste for early rising.

"Yet they all seem as cheerful as possible, though it must be confessed, that many of them look pale and unhealthy. It is said, that, when they are strong enough to stand this mode of life, they live very long; but it frequently happens that girls who come into this convent, are obliged to leave it from sickness, long before the expiration of their noviciate.

"They had taken the trouble to prepare an elegant supper for us. The Bishop took his place in an antique velvet chair, the Senora — and I were placed on each side of him. The room was very well lighted, and there was a great profusion of custards, jellies and ices, as if we had been supping at the most profane *cafe*. The nuns did not sit down, but walked about, pressing us to eat, the Bishop now and then giving them cakes, with permission to eat them, which they received laughing. They have the most humble and caressing manners, and really appear to be the most amiable and excellent woman in the world. They seem to

make no ostentation of virtue, but to be seriously impressed with the conviction that they have chosen the true road to salvation; nor are there in them any visible symptoms of that spiritual pride from which few devotees are exempt.

"After supper, a small harp was brought in, which had been sent for by the Bishop's permission. It was terribly out of tune, with half the strings broke; but we were determined to grudge no trouble in putting it in order, and giving these poor recluses what they considered so great a gratification. We got it into some sort of condition at last, and when they heard it played, they were vehement in their expressions of delight. The Senora —, who has a charming voice, afterwards sang to them, the Bishop being very indulgent, and permitting us to select whatever songs we chose, so that when rather a profane canticle, "The Virgin of the Pillar," (La Virgin del Pilar,) was sung, he very kindly turned a deaf ear to it, and seemed busily engaged in conversation with an old Madre, till it was over.

"We were really sorry to leave them; particularly as it is next to impossible that we shall ever see them again; and it seemed as if in a few hours a friendship had been formed between us and these recluses, whose sensations are so few, they must be the more lasting. The thoughts of these poor women cost me a sad and sleepless night. They wear the coarsest and hardest stuff next their skin, in itself a perpetual penance. In these robes they are buried; and one would think that if any human being can ever leave this world without a feeling of regret, it must be a nun of the Santa Teresa."

CONVENT LIFE AND WORK.

TO those who have had but little opportunity to examine the inner workings of the Catholic Church the subject of the conventual life has always been something of a puzzle. Of course it has been difficult for them to obtain a personal insight into its details, just as it would be difficult to gain admittance into the mosque of St. Sophia or a Hindu community of religious. Curiosity, unsatisfied, betakes itself to hearsay, and since those who know most are generally most silent about their knowledge, it is to the gossip of ignorance or prejudice that curiosity looks for an answer. Distorted views or imaginary descriptions end by being received into the mill of public opinion, and issue thence ground into gospel truth and invested with mysterious (because fictitious) interest. It is strange that a phase of life which is in constant practice at the present day, often within a stone's throw of our own doors, and which has personal ramifications in the families of our neighbors and acquaintances, should still be so much of a phenomenon to the public mind. In England, France, Italy, Germany and America I have been familiarly acquainted with it, have studied its principles and its details under many varying forms, and never found it less interesting because it was *not* mysterious. Human, fallible beings are the inhabitants of monasteries either for males or females, with individual peculiarities and different sympathies—by no means machines, but free and intelligent agents, each with a character as individual as that of separate flowers in a large garden—full of personality and of human imperfection.

In Rome, not far from the Fountain of Trevi—of whose waters it is said that they have the power to ensure the return to Rome of any one who has drunk of them in a cup not heretofore devoted to common purposes—is the spacious convent called San Domenico e Sisto. Here the first convent of Dominican

friars was established, and the spot is historic ground in the annals of the order of Preachers. In the turbulent thirteenth century, when papal, feudal and democratic parties opposed each other in Rome, and the vigorous sap of half-tamed barbarian life still coursed through the pulses of Italy, Saint Dominic rose like a reformer, a lawgiver and a peacemaker. On the other side of the Tiber, entrenched behind baronial walls and fiercely protected by baronial champions, was a convent of women whose practice of their vows had become too relaxed for such a bad example to be allowed to remain unreprieved. The ecclesiastical authorities wished peremptorily to disestablish the convent and filter its inmates through some neighboring religious houses more zealous and more edifying in their conduct. But the nuns, who were mostly of noble families, appealed to their charters, their immunities and exemption from papal jurisdiction. Their fathers and brothers, the formidable barons who held within the papal city many strongholds well garrisoned, took up their quarrel and dared the world to dispossess the refractory sisterhood. Saint Dominic had just brought his friars to the dilapidated house then known as San Sisto, had caused rapid repairs to be made, and in his fervor had created round himself a nucleus of ardent reformers. The Gordian knot was referred to him, and with characteristic abruptness he promised to cut it at once. He came alone to the gates of the convent, presented no credentials from pope or cardinal, and asked an interview with the abbess. He spoke of the holiness of an austere life, the reward of those that "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," the merit of obedience, the need of reform, the great work that his order was doing for God, and the call for more laborers in the field: he proposed to the nuns to be his helpers among their own sex, and his coheireses in the heavenly

reward of the future. His eloquence and zeal soon melted the haughty resolve of the rebellious but still noble-minded women. Roused to a new sense of power and responsibility, they embraced his rigid rule, and with the enthusiasm of their sex, that never halts midway in reform, became models of austerity. The better to signify to the world the spiritual change wrought in their temper, they migrated from the abode which they had sworn to make the symbol and paladium of their independence, and went to San Sisto, Saint Dominic taking his monks to repeople the convent across the Tiber left vacant by the submissive sisterhood.

It is with this new house, henceforth called San Domenico e Sisto, that one of my earliest recollections of conventual life is connected. The order is one which enjoins strict enclosure. The dress is of coarse white serge or flannel, consisting of a long, narrow tunic with flowing sleeves drawn over tight ones of linen; a *scapular* or stole (*i. e.*, a piece of straight stuff half a yard broad worn hanging from the shoulders both behind and before); a leathern girdle round the waist, from which hangs a rosary, large, common and set in steel; strong, thick sandals; a linen wimple enveloping the face and hiding the ears, neck and roots of the hair; a woolen veil, black for the professed nuns, white for the novices, and of white *linen* for the lay sisters; and over all an immense black cloak, falling around the figure in statuesque folds,

In this order, and almost invariably in every other, a candidate is admitted at first as a *postulant* for a period of six months—a sort of preliminary trial of her fitness for the religious life. She wears ordinary clothes during this time—plain and black, of course, but not of any prescribed shape. Sometimes, however, she is required by custom to wear a plain black cap. After six months she is admitted as a novice—*i. e.*, she solemnly puts off the secular dress and wears the habit of the order, making the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience for the space of one year only. The de-

tails of the ceremony vary in different orders, but the ceremony itself is called in all by the generic name of "clothing" or "taking the white veil." In orders where a white woolen veil is the badge of profession (these are not many) a linen one is equally the mark of the novice and the lay sister. Although there exists for convenience' sake a distinction between choir-nuns and lay sisters—the former paying a dowry to the common fund on the day of their entrance, and the latter bringing their manual service to the house instead of any offering—still, the difference is not spiritual, and beyond the mere distribution of labor is not practically discernible. In orders where the education of youth is the primary object, the lay sisters, under the supervision of the choir-nun to whose charge the house-keeping is directly entrusted, perform all the menial service, which would otherwise make too many inroads on the time of the teaching nuns; but in other orders, the Carmelites for instance, the lowest work, be it of the kitchen, the laundry or the chamber, is undertaken in turn by every member of the community. When Madame Louise, the daughter of Louis XV. of France, became a Carmelite nun, the first task assigned her was the washing of coarse dishes and the sweeping of floors. A parallel case is that of the Cistercian monks, who to this day, at their famous farm-monastery at Mount St. Bernard, England, are bound by their rule to labor with their hands so many hours a day. No exception is made for the abbot himself; and when we visited the establishment a few years ago we had to wait some time for the abbot, who was digging in a distant field. Scholar and savant are not exempt any more than the humblest member of the brotherhood; and as it is a very learned order, and attracts many recent converts to Catholicism, it is not infrequently that one recognizes in the monk-laborer, digging potatoes or hoeing turnips, some Anglican clergyman of delicate nurture and scholarly renown. To this monastery, entirely self-supported by its extensive farm, is attached a boys' reformatory, one of whose products is the most excel-

lent butter known in England. Tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry, turning, etc. are all taught under the supervision of the monks: those among the boys who wish it are helped to emigrate, and others apprenticed at the proper time to the trades they have already been taught at Mount St. Bernard.

To resume our sketch of the Dominican nuns in Rome. It is the custom in Italy for a young lady about to "enter religion" to choose a godmother or *madrina*, a lady of proper age and mature experience, who acts as her chaperon during the few weeks preceding the "clothing." She comes forth from the convent where she has been a postulant, and, dressed in the garb of the world, makes formal visits to all her relations, friends and patrons, assists at public ceremonies in the local churches, even visits some places of interest, such as museums and galleries. This is her solemn farewell to the world, and she is supposed thus to have another trial given to the steadfastness of her resolve, another chance to abandon it before it is too late. A young girl of an illustrious Roman family, but of very slender fortune, was about to enter the Dominican order at the time to which I allude, in 1853. Her only sister had for some years been a nun of a strictly enclosed order, and Mademoiselle G——, having chosen as her *madrina* an English Catholic lady who had been enabled to show her some kindness while still in the world, went to bid farewell to this elder sister. The meeting was very affecting: the sisters could not see each other face to face—a thick grating separated them. The elder had long been a spiritual guide to the younger: she had led her mind in the direction of the cloister, and now rejoiced sincerely that God had smoothed away the family difficulties and pecuniary embarrassments which for some time had stood in the way of her vocation. Still, natural affection was not stifled in the generous, unselfish heart of the cloistered nun, and she wept with her sister at the thought that, though the walls of the same city would hold them both till death, and hardly a few blocks of houses separate their convent homes, yet

in the flesh they should never meet again. The English godmother sat in a remote corner of the cool, shady parlor, sympathizing in silence with the touching scene, but keeping as much in the background as etiquette and custom allowed, that she might not intrude on this last farewell. At length the curtain behind the grating fell, and the young girl had severed the tenderest link that bound her to the world. Many other visits were paid—some to friends of Mademoiselle G——'s parents (she had long been an orphan), some to ecclesiastical personages who had interested themselves to procure her admission into the Dominican community. With repeated blessings the young girl left their presence, every day advancing nearer to her spiritual bridal.

At last the day came. Early in the morning the *madrina* arrived at the convent with her two little girls of six and eight years old dressed in white as bridesmaids, or, as the Italian term *angiolini* has it, little angels. They bore delicate baskets filled with white flowers to strew before the "bride," and their office during the ceremony was to hold the novice's gloves, fan and handkerchief. The young girl herself, looking pale and earnest, walked up the aisle of the convent chapel in bridal robes of white silk, with a veil and wreath on her head, and round her neck a string of pearls, an heirloom in the G—— family. Her brother, the only male representative of her once powerful house, was present in the outer chapel, full of grief at a sacrifice which he had never countenanced, and ready to claim that morning the only legacy of his sister the promise of which he had been able to secure—the thick coils of her black hair when they should have been cut off preparatory to her taking the novice's veil. The scene was very solemn. The nuns sat in their carved stalls within the grating whose black bars divided them from the "bride" and her friends in the ante-chapel: the chant of psalms and versicles came down from a hidden gallery, and the priest in rich vestments stood at the foot of the altar within the railing. The service went on in the midst of a palpable hush; the

very air seemed hardly to vibrate; the bride, attended by her two angiolini, left her gorgeous kneeling-chair and advanced to the open door in the grating, where the priest met her. Question and answer were interchanged in Italian, and the young girl vowed that of her own free will she left the world and joined the order of St. Dominic. Prayers in Latin followed, then again a chanted psalm, and Mademoiselle G—— was led away through the iron-grated door, which was then closed. It was not long ere she reappeared in the long close tunic of white serge, her head covered with a temporary veil of coarse linen and her feet shod in sandals. A procession of nuns, each bearing a lighted taper, escorted her to the foot of the altar (everything was visible through the grating), and she knelt before the officiating priest. A white woolen veil was handed to him, which he blessed with holy water, the sign of the cross and the prescribed ejaculations accompanying these rites: he then laid it on her head as a "symbol of the virgin modesty" to which she was now pledged. Two nuns were at hand to pin it into the right folds while a silver ring was being blessed in the same manner as the veil. This was placed on the ring-finger of the left hand as a "symbol of the intimate union and espousal with Christ" signified by her renunciation of the world. The scapular of white serge, similarly blessed, was then laid upon her shoulders as a type of the "yoke of obedience and sacrifice;" and lastly, the black cloak, signifying charity, covering and enveloping the whole person. Then in a loud, firm voice, instinct with passion and resolve, she read, standing, the formal declaration of her religious vows. When this was over the mother-superior led the novice, now Sister Maria Colomba, to a small table on which lay a bridal wreath of white roses and a crown of thorns. She asked her solemnly which was her choice in life, and the novice took up the crown of thorns and placed it on her head. This typical ceremony I never saw performed in any other order. Shortly after the crown of thorns was exchanged for that of roses, the superior saying, "In-

asmuch as thou hast chosen the crown which thy Saviour wore, He rewards thee with that which is a shadow of the heavenly crown reserved for His spouses in heaven." This bridal token the new nun wears during the whole day.

To a few ladies and to the angiolini a special permission to enter the enclosure was given in honor of the day: a festive meal was served in the bare, cool refectory, the rule of silence being relaxed for the special occasion, and the nuns wearing a happy, child-like expression that hardly varied in the face of the youngest novice and that of the septuagenarian "mother." The strangers were shown through the dormitories, the kitchen, the laundry, the garden, the community-room, where embroidery, painting and study diversify the labors of the broom and the dishcloth, and everywhere the same exquisite neatness struck the eye. Everything used in the house was of the coarsest description—the linen like sackcloth, but speckless; the delf as thick and rough as if made for sailors; the floors mostly of brick or stone; the furniture of unpainted deal. Over each bed, which is only a board on trestles covered with heavy sacking, is a common crucifix and a sprig of box or olive blessed on Palm Sunday. The sisters sleep in their tunics. The library is common property, but no one may use or read any book save by permission of the superioress. The rules of fasting and abstinence are not exactly the same in every convent of the order, but the broad rule is that meat should be eaten only on great holidays, vegetables and farinaceous preparations, such as most Italians are not unskilled in, forming the staple of the nuns' food. Fish is almost as rare a luxury as meat. Their bread is coarse and brown, and their drink indifferently water or a wine so sour that it is practically vinegar. Not that these nuns are not good cooks and bakers: witness the delicate sweetmeats, biscuits and pastry they offer to strangers on such festival days as the one just described, the fruit-preserves in blocks sold for their sustenance by the nuns at Funchal, Madeira, and the fairy frostwork of sugar seen on great occasions in French.

convents. No womanly art is a stranger to the deft fingers of cloistered nuns. Bookbinding is a pursuit well known among them, as is also the mounting in delicate filigree of the "Agnus Dei" or waxen representation of the Lamb of God, blessed by the pope at Easter and distributed throughout Christendom from the papal metropolis. Another convent industry is the preparation of the wafers used in the celebration of mass.

These Dominicanesses rise at four in the morning and dine at eleven, making after that only one slight meal in the evening—bread and vegetables, for instance, or a saucerful of macaroni. At stated times they assemble in the chapel for the singing of the "divine office," and always have an early mass, at which the whole community receives holy communion. This is administered by the priest through a square opening in the iron grating dividing the nuns from the altar. At eight, or at latest nine o'clock in the evening, all are in bed, whence they rise again at midnight (in some orders at two o'clock in the morning, but this custom involves rising somewhat later, generally five o'clock) for matins and lauds.

The duties of separate departments are judiciously divided among the sisters. There is the infirmarian; the *économe*, or housekeeper, to whose share falls the supplying of the larder; the librarian, the sacristan, the portress (often in cloistered orders this position, which is exceptional in its exemptions, involves the ordering of outside business matters), the care-taker of the garments and linen, the gardener, the secretary, the mistress and sub-mistress of novices. The house is managed like clockwork. Punctually as the bell rings each sister goes to the task appointed for that hour, and leaves it, no matter how important or absorbing it may be, for the duty appointed by the rule for the next division of time. Silence prevails among the sisters at almost all hours: for at most three times a day speech is permitted, and seldom for more than half an hour at a time. During meals one sister reads the *Lives of the Saints* aloud. Each in her turn takes

the place of server at table. The superiorress alone has power to dispense with the rule of silence in case of necessity, as she transacts most of the business, social or legal, of her community.

During the year of novitiate the novices are under the direct rule of the mistress of novices, whose authority over them is paramount, though she herself is of course under a vow of obedience to the superior. When a novice receives a visit from one in the world she is accompanied by the "mistress," and if the visitor be a near relation and a woman the curtain behind the grating is withdrawn; if only a friend, the visitor does not even see the nun, as the thick curtain is drawn, and the only communication possible is by speech. It is generally possible, on any necessity arising, to obtain a special permission to break through the rule of enclosure: this is done by applying to the superior-general of the order, or in Rome to the Holy Father, whose authority naturally supersedes all others. Sometimes the power to dispense lies with the local superior, but it is a prerogative seldom used, and wisely so. In every order the internal government of each house is of an elective form, but when once chosen the superiors exercise absolute authority. The community meets every three years (in some orders every year) and chooses by vote a superiorress, an assistant superiorress and a mistress of novices. Only the professed nuns have a vote, and the majority carry the day. These "officers," once appointed, rule the house and choose all minor deputies themselves. The heads alone of each house assemble at the death of the superior-general (or abbess, as she is styled in some of the more ancient orders) and choose another, equally by vote, the election being sometimes decided by only one vote. This assembly is called a "chapter." The generals of most orders reside in Rome.

The year after the "clothing" of Sister Maria Colomba we witnessed the final ceremony of her "profession"—that is, of her assuming the black veil and renewing her religious vows *for life*. Hitherto, she had been free to return to the

world and marry: henceforth such a return (unless by a dispensation so rarely given that it is practically non-existent) would be sacrilege. The details of the ceremony vary in different orders, and with those which are not cloistered the scene is far less impressive. What we were going to see included the most solemn forms ever used. This time the whole service took place behind the grating: there were no "bridesmaids" now, no shadow of worldly pomp was borrowed to enhance the last and momentous consecration of religion. The novice knelt between the superior and the mistress of novices, each bearing a lighted taper. The white veil was taken from her head, and a black one, previously blessed with holy water sprinkled over it in the form of a cross, substituted: the low chant of the unseen choir of nuns sounded impressively as the echo of another world. Then came the renewal of the dread vows, binding now until death, and the voice of the young girl seemed firm though low: her face wore a calm, peaceful look, subdued by the solemn occasion, yet irrepressibly suggesting a joy unknown in the world, where joy is seldom free from passion. The most interesting ceremony, however, was yet to come. The slow chant shaped itself into the words of the psalm *De Profundis*, the special prayer which in the Catholic Church is reserved for the dead, and four professed nuns advanced toward their new sister, who was now prostrate at the foot of the altar. Each held the corner of a funeral pall, which they slowly dropped over the figure of Sister Maria Colomba, and, kneeling, held it over her until the last verse of the psalm had been sung. This suggestive ceremony closed the service. It is a forcible and picturesque type of the complete severance of the nun's future life and interests from the outside world, the death of her heart to all carnal affections, the "dying daily" which Saint Paul calls the "life" of the Christian soul. A long procession accompanied the newly-professed nun to the inner rooms of the convent, and for this one day again she wore over the black veil the bridal wreath, which

to-morrow would be put away until required for her last adornment in the coffin.

Ten years after our farewell to Sister Maria Colomba behind the bars of the convent-parlor we saw her again, and, armed with a papal permission, were shown by her over the whole convent. Those rare occasions when a stranger is allowed to penetrate the "enclosure" are always gala-days for the nuns. I remarked the blithe, youthful look that shone on all their faces: Sister Maria Colomba herself, from a pale, nervous girl, had expanded into a strong, hale, buxom woman. The glow of health was on her cheek, the sparkle of innocent mirth shone in her eye. There was one among the sisters who gleefully asked me to guess at her age. She was a sweet, fresh-complexioned, matronly woman. "Not more than fifty, good mother," was the answer.

She laughed and gently clapped her hands. "Add twenty years to that," she answered with an innocent burst of pride. Then she told how she had entered the order while yet in her "teens," had held half the offices of trust in the community, and had never missed any of the most rigid fasts or absented herself once from the midnight office, never having known so much as a day's ill-health. "Ah, a nun's life is a healthy one, child, as well as a happy one," she said in conclusion.

We went over the kitchen, laundry, refectory, dormitories, chapel, garden, etc. Just the same as before—a little "calvary" at one end of the garden and a rough picture of a Madonna in an arbor, the long, echoing corridors spotless as the deck of a man-of-war, and the smiling faces making a very flower-garden of the community-room. We left loaded with specimens of the nuns' work—Agnus Deis in frames of silver filigree dotted with white roses and hanging from white satin ribbon-bows; flake-like biscuits of peculiar flavor; and baskets, pincushions, etc. of delicate workmanship. I do not know whether this convent is still in the hands of the Dominicanesses, so many in Rome having become barracks since the new royal

authority superseded that of the pope. But the picture of San Domenico e Sisto as it was in 1853 and 1863 may yet interest many who perhaps will never have the opportunity of seeing such an establishment for themselves.

This is a very fair sample of the convents of the stricter and cloistered orders: there are some exceptional houses, such as that of the Sepolte Vive, where the rule is far more austere. There is but one convent of this description in Rome, and I believe one or two in France. It is a noteworthy fact that most of the strictest observances of penance originated in France, and are continued there to this day. This convent of the Sepolte Vive ("Buried Alive") is not formally sanctioned by the papal authority, but only *tolerated*. The nuns were forbidden more than ten years ago to admit any more novices, and although the individual zeal of those who started the order was not exactly censured, still a tacit intimation of its being considered excessive and imprudent was given by the highest ecclesiastical court. Among their customs (which much resemble those of the Trappist monks) these nuns have that of digging their own graves, and as the cemetery is small and included in the "enclosure," the oldest graves are opened after a period of forty or fifty years, and the crumbling contents ejected to make room for the lately deceased. The death of a nun's nearest relation, be it father, mother, brother or sister, is made known to the superior alone, and she in her turn announces it, *not* to the bereaved one, but to the whole sisterhood, in this manner: They are all assembled in the community-room, and admonished to "pray for the soul of the father or mother" (as the case may be) "of one among their number." To the day of her death the nun never knows how near and dear by the ties of Nature may have been the soul for which she has prayed every day since the announcement was made.

The Sepolte Vive, when found guilty of any breach of the rule, are labeled with a ticket attached to their habit, and on which their fault is written in large,

conspicuous letters—for instance, "Disobedience," "Curiosity," "Talkativeness"—and this they wear at their ordinary avocations for as many hours as the superioress commands. They never undress on going to bed, and wear the same habit winter and summer, the stuff being too hot for the one and too cold for the other; so that at all times the penance is the same. On the wrists many of them wear iron manacles that graze the skin and cause constant irritation at every turn of the hand: this is sometimes imposed as a penance, but very often is voluntarily inflicted on themselves by zealous members of the sisterhood. Before the prohibition to receive additional novices the sisterhood consisted of a fixed number, and when a vacancy occurred by the death of one the place was filled by the first on the list of postulants. *This list was always a large one*, and generally contained many names belonging to the noblest families of Rome. These details were gathered from the same lady who acted as madrina to the Dominican nun Sister Maria Colomba; and when she and a friend obtained permission from the pope to penetrate the "enclosure," the nuns told her that it was *twenty years* since the same privilege had been granted. For almost the space of a generation no stranger had been seen or heard by them, for not even the privilege of a grated and curtained parlor interview is allowed to the Sepolte Vive. And yet with all this unparalleled refinement of austerity they were as blithe and healthy a body of women, as cheerful and youthful in manner, as peaceful and calm in appearance, as could be found among the Sisters of Charity or the lay members of an association of Mercy.

The Carmelites are an order spread wide over the Christian world. The reform of Saint Teresa was sadly needed among these nuns three hundred years ago, and the recital of the vehement opposition made to her efforts shows the merit due to her. At the present day the order is one of the strictest in existence. The habit is of coarse brown serge, including the tunic and scapular, a cord

round the waist, sandals (in England and other northern climates shoes are allowed), a black veil and an ample white cloak. They rise at two o'clock, winter and summer alike, to sing matins, and when they retire to rest at night one of their number walks through the corridors—in this order each nun has a cell—springing a rattle and repeating in a clear tone a verse of Scripture to serve as a subject of meditation before going to sleep. In the choir the Carmelites are only permitted the use of three notes, the reason alleged for this restriction being that the service of God must not run the risk of becoming an occasion of temptation to the singers. These nuns are very strictly cloistered, and their rules regarding visitors are much the same as those described at length in the beginning of this paper.

The cloistered orders are less numerous, but also less known, than the communities formed for active duty, such as education and nursing the sick; but in describing their constitution and rules we show the reader the true basis on which the more modern and active orders are constituted. The traditions of the spiritual life came down through them, and they represent the principle of vicarious oblation which animates all the different phases of convent life; *i. e.*, the substitution of a small body of voluntary servants of God for the entire world, which ought to be perpetually engaged in His service and worship. The Benedictines, Capuchins and Visitation nuns are also cloistered, but the last are the only ones of this description who are likewise teachers of youth. Many very superior women belong to this order, which, except for the enclosure, practices no special physical austerities. The principle of the rule is the subduing of the will and the curbing of the spirit. The order is a recent one, and was instituted by Saint Francis of Sales while Beza ruled in Geneva and the Reformation had just disturbed the religious balance of Europe. With consummate prudence the new order was directed to employ the means best understood by the age. Cold calculation had succeeded to ardent zeal: the public

mind no longer instinctively revered the old heroic type of dragon-tamers, be they called Roland or Saint Benedict. The new current required a new rudder, and the Visitation nuns supplied the need. At first they were not even meant to be cloistered, but to form a kind of missionary society (as their very name implies) among the Calvinists of Savoy and France. This original intention was soon overruled by the Italian advisers of Saint Francis: the southern European mind has ever been slow to conceive the idea of a more spiritual protection than bolts and bars. But even in their cloistered sphere the Visitation nuns clung to useful, active work, and became a teaching order. They and the Ursulines (who in Italy, at least, are cloistered) shared this task among them till the more modern order of the "Sacred Heart" almost monopolized it. I have myself known women of the most tried virtue and rare learning among the "Visitandines." Their rule is less strict about visitors, and even strangers are admitted to the parlor without a curtain being drawn behind the grating. Their features are thus perfectly visible, and you can even shake hands between the bars.

Even to this day there is hardly a noble family of Catholic Europe that has not one or more representatives among the religious orders. In England, both among "converts" and families of old Catholic stock, there are many girls whose names have been absorbed into those given at the same time as the ring and veil of a novice. In Flanders there are fully half a dozen convents—at Bruges, Antwerp and Louvain—emphatically called "English," and founded by scions of great English families exiled for their adherence to the old faith under Elizabeth and James I. They are mostly Augustinians. The new order of the "Sacred Heart" has drawn to it women from Russia, Spain, America, as well as from its native land of France, and the Sisters of Charity have won a worldwide fame in the hospitals of the East and the recent battle-fields of the West.

I have dwelt chiefly on the life of the old contemplative, cloistered orders, be-

cause they are less known to the public and more mistakes are made about their constitution and rules, and also because in these old cradle-institutions are hidden the roots of the whole religious system which to this day crops out so vigorously in works of mercy over every land where the Catholic Church has a foothold. Among the uncloistered orders of religious women—and here we expect to be better understood and more fairly met by those whose knowledge of "religion" is not personal—there are many that fulfill heroic missions, perform useful tasks, or even silent, uncomplaining drudgery. In all large European towns the *cornette* of the Sister of St. Vincent of Paul is seen in hospital, prison and asylum, in the garret of the dying workman as well as by the bed where the warrior lies in state—in the humble, schools of the lowest suburbs and in the *crèches* of the darkest byways.

The *crèche*—so called in remembrance of the crib of Bethlehem—is an institution of the greatest use to poor women obliged to work for their living. They either find their children an insuperable bar to their labor, or else a source of constant anxiety during their absence. To the *crèche*, however, they can take the little ones in the early morning and leave them till late at night, paying only a small sum, such as five cents a day, if they are able, while if circumstances warrant their being exempted even this is not required. The house is supported chiefly by voluntary contributions, and the sisters often have lay assistants eager to share in their labor of love. The children are taken in at all ages, the tiniest unweaned infant not excepted: there are little cots of all sizes prepared for them, an abundance of milk, toys for the older ones, picture-books, etc. They are fed three times a day, washed and combed before being sent home (although constant applicants are expected to bring their children tidy and neat on first arrival), and if the mother fails to return at night, they are of course housed with the tenderest care. As there would be no room to accommodate permanent baby-boarders without impairing the orig-

inal intention for which the *crèche* is opened, these little waifs, if not claimed after three nights and days, are sent to the foundling asylum: this, however, does not often occur. There are many of these institutions scattered through France: London has two, and New York will soon have one—perhaps by this time it has already been opened. A woman earning her bread by hard work would have to leave her children in the care of some neighbor, who most likely would fail in her task or teach the children bad things, and demand some compensation all the same. If the eldest child were left in charge of younger infants, as is so often the case with the honest poor, the chances are that it will break or injure its spine by carrying the little ones. All this anxiety is avoided by this beautiful and inviting arrangement, which is generally under the management of the Sisters of Charity. The London *crèches* have a night school for working girls and grown women in connection with the principal part of the institution; also a Sunday school for children. Among the rules is one which forbids the wearing of artificial flowers or any tawdry finery during school-time. But in another part of London artificial flowers in a Sunday bonnet are a sign of a reclaimed female drunkard, as the clergyman has hit on the ingenious method of advising the women to leave off drinking, that they may be able to afford some Sunday finery wherewith to please their husbands' eyes and to hold up their heads with the best in church!

Old age is as helpless as infancy, and less attractive in its helplessness, so that the task undertaken by the Little Sisters of the Poor is still more meritorious when performed in the devoted spirit which characterizes them. They are literally the servants of beggars: they are bound to possess nothing and to hoard nothing; they live on the refuse of refuse, begging the crumbs from rich men's tables to feed the hungry ones under their care, and when these are satisfied sitting down to the scanty remains. They have a large establishment in London, which I once visited, but which has since been

divided into two, the aim of both continuing the same. The sisters wear a very unpretending black gown and cap: when out of doors they add to this a poke-bonnet and thick veil, with a large black shawl. They have a little donkey-cart, which they drive themselves, and which makes daily pilgrimages all over town, stopping at the houses of the rich of all denominations and receiving contributions of that which is too often thought below the cook's while to claim as a perquisite. So laden, the Little Sisters return to their old people, and a transformation begins in the vast kitchen. No one would believe what savory dishes they manufacture out of the leavings and parings of great houses: everything is sifted, cleaned, washed, as the case requires; each kind of food is carefully separated and placed in its appointed place; an immense cauldron is continually on the fire, and soups and jellies are in a constant state of fusion and preparation. Puddings of all sorts come out of the renovating oven: joints of roast meat are the only things which are exceptional, and sometimes the more generous charity of some outsider adds even this luxury to the usual fare. The Little Sisters of the Poor clothe as well as feed their charges: for this, too, they trust to charity, and left-off clothes are a great boon to them. They are so ingenious that there is hardly a thing of which they cannot make a deft use. They have houses in New York and Philadelphia, and already do an immense deal of good among the destitute aged poor.

The Order of Sion is a rather peculiar one, its principal object being the conversion to Christianity and subsequent education of young-Jewesses. It has been founded within the last forty years by the brothers Ratisbonne, both of them Jews of distinction converted to Christianity. The elder brother (they are both priests now) superintends the order in Europe: the younger resides at the mother-house at Jerusalem. The convent is an educational establishment, where the daughters of Orientals of all kinds are received—Jews, Arabs, Syrians, Armenians, etc. In Europe the houses,

of course, do not confine themselves to Jewish pupils, else they would find less work than their many hands could do, but receive boarders and give a solid education like the other and more fashionable convents. As a child I lived nearly a year in one of these houses, a large, roomy, silent villa, two hours from Paris. Behind the house was a garden and grove crossed in all directions by bewildering little paths leading into unexpected hollows where a rustic altar and statuette of Our Lady would be placed, or a crucifix erected in startling loneliness on a little hillock. A wide avenue of lime trees, where the pupils might be seen early in the morning studying their tasks, or in the afternoon eating their luncheon of grapes and brown bread, traversed this grove in a straight line, and here on certain feast-days nuns and pupils would form picturesque processions, with the customary banners, tapers, white veils and swelling hymns. Here the Ratisbonne brothers came to rest from their work of furthering the interests of the order—the elder a fatherly, portly man with white hair and a gentle manner, the younger a bronzed, black-bearded man, a true Oriental, with enthusiasm expressed in every line of his countenance and every flash of his piercing eye. He was only on a visit at that time, and then, as now, made Jerusalem his permanent home. There are one or two convents of this order in England, but I think none as yet in America.

The convent of the Assumption at Autueil, a suburb of Paris, is one renowned for its excellent educational advantages. I spent a week there one winter on a visit to a near relative among the pupils, and had an opportunity to observe the clock-like life of the place. All the girls I have known to be educated there were better scholars than any brought up elsewhere. There were many English and American girls, besides Poles, Germans and West Indian creoles. The war of 1860-64 left traces of strange animosity among the Northern and Southern children: it was hardly credible that such a spirit could animate young children so long removed from the immediate home

influences that would otherwise have accounted for the feeling. Among the nuns were several English women, clever and deeply read, but softer-hearted than most scholars who have had too much to do with the world. There was also a sister of Père Hyacinthe among the Assumptionists, and the great orator himself often came to the convent-chapel to preach simple little sermons to the school-girls. His sister was terribly crushed by the news of his defection from the Catholic Church, and, I believe, refused even to see him again.

A very beautiful scene which I witnessed on the 8th of December in this convent was the renewal of the vows. The mass was celebrated in the chapel at five in the morning, of course by gas and candle-light. The body of the chapel was perfectly clear, the community sat in carved wooden stalls round the altar, the pupils assisted from the galleries above, and hidden under the gallery was the small but very perfect choir of nuns and children. The hymns of Père Hermann, a famous pianist and composer, a pupil of Liszt, a convert from Judaism, and afterward a Carmelite friar, are very popular in France, and of these the music chiefly consisted. At the communion the superioress stepped forward, wearing the white woolen mantle (which with a purple tunic is the complete dress of this order) and knelt to receive the holy sacrament. A nun in the same costume, bearing a lighted taper and bowing almost to the ground, stood on each side of her as the priest communicated her, and so on till the whole sisterhood had each knelt separately and the bowing figures, like attendant angels, had done homage to each as the tabernacle, for a time, of the blessed sacrament. When the mass was over each professed sister solemnly read over the formula of her religious vows before a table on which lay a crucifix, which each reverently kissed in token of rededication of herself to the divine service.

The order of the Good Shepherd is one that is known throughout the world. It has branch houses in every country. The one to which I shall specially refer

is in New York. It stands on the banks of the East River, overlooking Astoria and Long Island, and from its top windows the eye reaches far up the Sound. Like all convents, it is marvelously clean. The order is devoted to the reclaiming of fallen women, and in this instance the house is a government reformatory. A certain annual subsidy is guaranteed by the city authorities, but voluntary contributions and the industry of the inmates give more than half toward the real support of the house. Three sorts of women are under the care of the nuns: (1) those whom the judges send there as criminals for a specified term; (2) those whom their friends send in hope of their being quietly reformed without the intervention of justice; and (3) those who seek of their own accord to do penance and earn forgiveness for their sins. This is of course the most hopeful class, and it frequently happens that these penitents become in time permanent inmates, and even nuns. In the latter case, as the rule of the order does not allow of the reception of any woman with a stain on her reputation, they are clothed in the habit of the Carmelite Third Order (brown serge tunic and black veil), in which the austerities are not very great. They go through the usual novitiate and make their vows in the regular manner: they are then called "Magdalens," and inhabit a portion of the house reserved for them, say their office at stated hours in their own chapel, contiguous to that of the Good Shepherd nuns, and live under obedience to the superioress of the latter. I saw about a dozen of them taking their evening walk in a pretty enclosed garden by the river-side. Other women who do not feel inclined to so full a renunciation of their liberty bind themselves by a promise, good for one year only, to the service of the house, and wear a semi-religious kind of cap and a scarlet badge with the letter *P* or *J*: they are divided into two classes, under the patronage of Saint Joseph and Saint Patrick. They renew the promise from year to year, and often spend their lives in this lay sisterhood of penance. Every inmate, be she prisoner or penitent, is

taught to sew, first by hand, then on the machine: many on their first entrance are so ignorant that they do not know on which finger to place the thimble. but after a while most are able to do a good day's work on common shirts and linen articles which the order contracts for with the wholesale shops. Another source of profit to the house is the laundry, but this is conducted exclusively by the nuns themselves. They do all the washing of surplices, altar-cloths, etc. for most of the Catholic churches of New York, for the convents and colleges, and for many private families. The fluting on children's frocks and the polish on shirts is something wonderful, and the young nun who superintends the concern seemed to be a real enthusiast in the matter. The nuns' dormitories, as well as those of the prisoners, are miracles of neatness; the refectories likewise. There are various immense airy halls where the nuns and girls sit sewing, and where a stranger sees a spectacle new to most people, certainly unexpected by the greater number—that of an assemblage of ugly faces, each belonging to an *unfortunate* whose temptations are usually understood to lie originally in her fatal beauty. Many of them are scarcely fourteen, and if once admitted, the melancholy chance is that they will be here again time after time: the sentences are seldom long enough to afford room for thought and conversion. Among the penitents the cases are far more hopeful, but the gentle sisters never forget their kind, conciliatory manner toward all; and unless a perverse demon whispers to their ear that these nuns are their *jailers*, the poor prisoners see little to remind them that they are not in a voluntarily chosen home.

Nuns are by no means a shiftless, unbusiness-like set of women: they can look after themselves as well as after the poor and forlorn: many of them, were they in the world, would be called strong-minded, blue-stockinged women. At Montreal there is a large establishment of the Sisters of the *Congrégation de Notre Dame*, generally called Congregation Sisters, founded by Margaret Bour-

geoys. They are the great educational sisters of Lower Canada. They own St. Paul's Island, some distance above the city: this is their farm, and one of the nuns, called the sister *économé*, has to visit it frequently and superintend matters, being the stewardess and committee of ways and means and revenue department combined. Of course a good horse is desirable for these drives, and their horses being one source of profit, the *économé* feels that the reputation of the breed ought not to be depreciated by her own "turnout." The young men of the town often meet her on the road and try to distance her, but this she will never permit, and her horse, faultlessly groomed and in splendid condition, always comes off the winner in these innocent races. One day, however, the bishop, having heard of this rivalry on the road, sent for her and remonstrated, alleging that such "fast" conduct might lend itself to scandalous rumors, and was altogether unbecoming in a *religious*. The nun smiled, and protested that she was ready to obey her superiors' orders in every particular, as all good Catholics and good religious are bound to do, but slyly insinuated the following cogent argument: "Does not Your Lordship think, however, that, since our convent lives partly on the reputation of this famous breed of trotters, it is hardly for the credit of the house that its representative conveyance should drag along as dejectedly as a street-vendor's donkey-cart?" What the bishop's reply was "the deponent sayeth not," but we may infer that this shrewd woman was at least as capable of controlling a wide meshwork of business details as he was of managing his diocese. Now, there are many such women in convents, for the religious life leads not, as people think, to a renunciation of your own self-dependence, but on the contrary to the highest kind of confidence in your own power *when backed by the help of Almighty God*. Saint Teresa of Spain once said these memorable words: "Teresa and tenpence are nothing; Teresa, tenpence *and God* are omnipotent."

LADY BLANCHE MURPHY.

CONVENT OF THE URSULINES.

(AT MONTREAL.)

The convent of the Ursulines, like most of the religious houses which were erected by the French, is built in the form of a hollow square. Connected with it is a small chapel, which is open to the public; but a curtain suspended behind a large grating conceals the nuns from the vulgar gaze.

At the principal door of the convent there is an open porch, with a barrel exactly similar to that which I saw at Fayal by which alms are dispensed to the poor.

On ringing the bell for admittance, this barrel was whirled half way round, so as to leave a small opening, and three nuns appeared within to whom we handed the order for our admittance. They told us, however, that Pere D—— was at that moment in the chapel, hearing confession, and that they should be obliged to detain us without, till he returned.

In a few minutes his reverence made his appearance, having entered the convent by a private passage; the door was then unlocked, and we were admitted. The Mere Superieure was waiting to receive us; a jolly, fresh looking woman, rather above the ordinary height, of a dignified carriage, and apparently about thirty-five or forty years of age. We had no sooner exchanged bows with the ladies, than the usual question was put to me by the Mere Superieure, "Parlez vous Francais, Monsieur?" Finding however that I was rather lame at this, she frankly waved ceremony and addressed me in English, which she spoke so well, that I could not help suspecting she was of an English family.

We were conducted first into the room in which the nuns hear the services of the chapel; a plain apartment, with an altar and a few pictures. From it we were taken into a kind of parlour, where all the *religieuses*, except those who were engaged in the school-room, were waiting to receive us. They were ranged in a line opposite the door, and immediately on our entering, bowed and smiled most graciously, and without the slightest appearance of formality or demureness. At one end of the row were four interesting young creatures wearing white veils; these were in their novicate, and Pere D—— informed us that they wore the white veil two years before assuming the vows and the black one. Besides them were three who had been invested with the veil only a few weeks before; had I visited Quebec a little sooner, I might have witnessed the ceremony, for it is always public. It was told that these three girls were only from eighteen to twenty-four years of age; they seemed not at all dull, but laughed and talked as good humoredly as any. The four novices seemed to be the only demure individuals among the whole, they bowed to us like the rest, but relaxed not a muscle of their countenances.

The dress of the Ursulines is dismal in the extreme. A long black robe of bombazine with very wide sleeves; a black veil tied round the forehead and thrown back over the shoulder; a piece of stiff starched linen covering the breast, and tied down by strings passing under the arms; the forehead hid by a piece of linen which covers to the eye-brows, and a corresponding bandage brought down under the chin, so as to conceal the ears and part of both cheeks,—all that is elegant and graceful in the female figure is thus completely concealed and the poor creatures are in the shape and colour not very unlike so many walking coffins. Some of them wore a leathern belt at the waist, with a rosary and cross hanging from it. The dress of the novices differs in nothing from that of the others, except the colour of the veil; which by the way, is not made use of to conceal the features, but is in all cases thrown back over the shoulders. The aspect of the nuns was more interesting than that of the *Sœurs Gris* at Montreal. Some of the young ones might I dare say have been thought pretty, had they worn a less ghast-

ly dress: a few of the others had something of the grandmothers aspect, but some, and the Mere Superieure in particular, had pleasing features and a lady like deportment.

About half a dozen of the nuns accompanied us from room to room, each of whom showed the utmost inclination to enter into conversation with us. We saw the three school-rooms, all full of neatly dressed girls at their tasks, with two nuns in each as teachers; two of these were devoted to the children of the poorer classes, who are educated for a very small annual sum, the other was for the daughters of those who could afford to pay more liberally. Whenever we entered, the whole rose from their seats and courtesied, continuing to stand still till we left the room. In passing from one room to another we were conducted through a pretty extensive garden; the wall which surrounded it is not high, and were the Sisters disposed to make off, it would present no serious obstacle.

From the schools we were conducted to the kitchen and dining hall. The kitchen has a pump-well within it, and the chimney is of ample size, somewhat resembling those of an old baronial castle. The dining hall is floored with bricks of an octagon shape, and covered with a kind of red varnish which they told us was cow's blood. Long tables of deal surround the hall, with a drawer for each individual, containing a knife, fork, and spoon; all exceedingly clean and neat. Two of the nuns, in succession, was upon the others. Passing through a gallery, which led I believe to sleeping apartments, I remarked over each of the doors an inscription in French; one of them, "Pour un moment de travail, une eternite de repose." Before taking leave, some little ornaments of neatly wrought lark-work, were exhibited to us, of which I purchased one or two.

We had been about an hour within, when a bell rang, which Pere D—— gave us to understand was the signal for our departure. The nuns conducted us to the door, which I attempted to open, but found it locked; the Superieure before producing the key joked very good humoredly at the unusual situation in which we found ourselves! The parting was as courteous and polite as could well be; we did not indeed shake hands, but no ladies could have pronounced a more affable and unceremonious "Bonjour Messieurs! Bon jour!"

Duncan's Travels in America.

DONA PAULA;

OR,

THE CONVENT AND THE WORLD.

A TALE OF PERU.

CHAPTER I.

THE ANGELUS.

It was a warm evening towards the end of the pleasant month of January—No, reader, this is no misprint; January is a pleasant month in some parts of the world, and the venue of our story is laid in the southern hemisphere.

It was a warm delightful evening; the lingering day was on the point of melting into twilight; the eternal trade-wind moved lazily through the streets and squares of Lima, flapping its wings still moist with the snows of the Andes, fanning the faintest air, and making it a luxury to breathe the breath of life. On such an evening, we beg the reader to repair with us to the City of Kings, the lordly capital of Peru—only in imagination, however: would to Heaven it were otherwise.

The fair Linnenians* had just sallied out for the evening *paseo*, vespers, an ice on the plaza, or the serious business of love-making.

* *Limenians*.—We have adopted this word in speaking of the inhabitants of Lima almost upon our own responsibility alone. We have seen it and heard it used but very seldom, and never by paramount authority. Writers seem to have followed no rule but their own caprice in that respect. They employ indiscriminately the epithets *Limayan*, *Limanese*, *Limanos*, and such like derivatives, without having either custom, analogy, or any other excuse whatever to offer, except this, that there is no one adjective which has thus far obtained exclusively in the case. We have made choice of the word at the head of this note for several reasons. Its termination has an English sound, an obvious recommendation. It resembles the corresponding term in Spanish, which is *Limeño* (pronounced *Limenio*.) And finally, its formation proceeds according to the analogy that governs in similar cases.

There had been no *toro* fight that day; and slowly had the tedious hours crept on despite the usual resources of Peruvian idleness, lisping scandal, smoking *puros*, drinking *maté*, (a habit imported from Buenos Ayres,) and lolling and rocking in the indispensable grass hammock that just swung clear of the stone floor. The streets were filling with *sayas y mantos*, that picturesque and convenient costume of the ladies of that region: Blessed *saya y manto*! Were Phidias to live again, and deify in marble the myth of Amorous Intrigue, certes he would drape his statue in that delightful dress. So uniform and similar to each other were the charming black phantoms that flitted past, delicate though not aerial, but graceful and languid as the dancing girls of old Ionia, that the mother could not have recognized her daughter, though her own needle had sewed every stitch of every seam and ploughed the silken furrows of the elegant disguise. Reader, did you ever lose your wits at a masquerade ball, in attempting to follow some particular black domino through the crowd of black dominos? If so, remember your bewilderment, and learn to pity a Limenian husband if he chance to be jealous; though—Manco-Capac be praised—the element of jealousy seldom enters into the character of the gentlemanly Peruvian.

But to return to our story—for we have a story to tell—the streets of Lima, on a fair evening of January, 183-, were filling with a throng of bustling mortals, bent on the busy pursuits of idleness. Under one of the arcades of the *Plaza Mayor*, several young men stood in a group, sipping *frescos*

de pñu for a pretext, but really and evidently engaged in the arduous toil of killing time. They were all foreigners ; some wore the British, others the American navy uniform ; one, somewhat taller than the rest, was conspicuous no less for his fine figure and pleasing, manly countenance, than for his citizen's dress, which contrasted with the gold bands and glittering buttons around him.

It was difficult to venture, with any degree of probability, any surmise whatever as to the nationality of the latter. His features and form had something of the North American cast ; but he had a slight accent when speaking in English, not that Yankee peculiarity which Mr. Cooper and other *English* authors are so fond of pointing out, but an unaccountable foreign intonation difficult to be located. He was not a native of Peru, for his fluent Castilian was free from all provincialism ; whenever he addressed a few complimentary remarks to passing *señoritas*, he lisped like a true Madrileña, although a practised ear might have detected that in his pronunciation which declared that he was not a Spaniard by birth. In truth he was one of those cosmopolites who have taught themselves foreign tongues, until they have lost, in a measure, the idiomatic peculiarities of their own.

"Saint Clair," cried an American midshipman, addressing this personage, "when is that steamer of yours going to astonish the natives of these parts ?"

"She will soon arrive, my boy ; why do you ask ?"

"Because I have invited the girls for an excursion to Chorillos on board of her ; we are to have the Vallejos, the Recaverras, and all the rest of the fashion."

"Well, Crocket, I should advise you not to appoint a day."

"Why so ?" unsuspiciously demanded the young man. "Don't you think she'll be in pretty soon ?"

"Yes, my boy ; at least I hope so ; but that is not the reason : you might get quarantined, you know. You remember the sailing match."

The young man addressed as Crocket, a curly-headed young middy, joined in the laugh which this remark elicited at his expense, although it alluded to a circumstance which had mortified him not a little. Owing to some youthful misdemeanor, his last lib-

erty day had proved a day of penance, which he had passed gazing ruefully through the starboard bridle-port of the unwieldy transport ship which represented the American flag in the harbor of Callao, whilst his friends, in fast cutters and with ladies and music on board, were beating against the fresh trade-wind, racing for the expense of a sumptuous dinner at San Lorenzo.

They were still laughing—for the author of the joke had that very afternoon shown himself the liberal proprietor of a champagne of superior brand—they were still laughing, when there "hove in sight," to use the phraseology of our new acquaintance, a most voluptuous figure attired in the national gear of the country. As usual, the folds of the *manto* were drawn over the head and features so as to allow but one eye to appear—but what an eye ! The diamond glittering on the pretty hand which held the jealous veil, threw no such flashes as that bright black eye. The lower edge of the *saya*, gathered quite tightly, displayed such tiny feet as Lima alone can boast, while the artful and coquettish motion of the figure contrived to give, through the ample drapery, such promise and vague indications of the perfection of female proportions, that Canova, had he been there, would have made a pilgrimage to the summit of Chimborazo for the sake of copying from such a model.

"Christopher Columbus !" ejaculated Crocket. This was a nautical oath peculiar to himself. Though wild to excess, the youth had principles of his own, and seldom indulged any very profane interjections.

"A ve-ry pret-ty girl," languidly drawled forth a young lord with a single epaulet, plying his quizzing-glass not ungracefully.

"Fine craft that," growled a red-faced, gray-headed lieutenant in H. B. M.'s Navy, who thought it unseamanlike to allow an opportunity to pass of bringing in Neptunian metaphors—"Fine craft that, and a capital figure-head."

"Saint Clair," resumed the young American officer, "did you see that look ? Hist, there goes another. She is after you, my fine fellow. Heave short, my boy, and make sail in chase."

Saint Clair had too good an opinion of his precious person, and withal too much sagacity in such matters, not to have noticed the look ; and the flattering inference of his young friend was the more readily enter-

tained, that he already knew by experience how many kind things the eye of a señorita can speak in the City of Kings.* Perhaps also he had business elsewhere, and was not sorry of a pretext to part company. At all events, he lost no time in following the technical directions of his sea-faring companion.

"No following," cried Saint Clair, as he started in pursuit.

"Honor bright," answered Crocket. "Come, gentlemen, let us go and try our luck at *monté*."

Not the bee-hunter, who *lines* the industrious little insect he pursues through the forest trees—not the Indian warrior, who dogs the mocassin prints upon the autumn leaves, ever displayed more perseverance and ingenuity than Saint Clair in tracking the game he was now chasing. Nevertheless, so many *sayas y mantos* rustled under the *portals* and in the open square, and so similar were they all to that of his innamorata, that several times he lost sight of her. Once he was on the point of giving up his enterprise, when he caught a glance of a jewelled little hand playing carelessly with the black folds of a *sayá*.

We dare not say that she beckoned to him; but certain it is that she displayed the jewel upon her hand at an opportune moment, and when her pursuer seemed to hesitate whether to proceed or turn back. The ladies will appreciate the nicety of our distinction, and perhaps furnish us with some delicate phrase to express the precise shade of our meaning. Saint Clair, however, did not stop to settle punctilios. No sooner did he mark his prey than he sprang forward to overtake it; but, at that very moment, the great bell of the Cathedral commenced tolling, the military band before the palace struck a solemn strain, and suddenly, as if by one accord, every being upon the plaza knelt down. It was the signal for the *Angelus*,† and therefore, men, women, and chil-

dren—men with guilty winnings still ringing in their hands, men who carried concealed weapons and were very ready to use them—women, who were hurrying to fulfil promises better left unkept—children, the too forward

description rather falls short of the truth. We have witnessed similar scenes time after time in the City of Kings. Fortunately we are enabled to transcribe a passage in point from a highly respectable authority:—

"Every morning at a quarter to nine, the great bell of the Cathedral announces the raising of the Host, during the performance of high mass. Immediately every sound is hushed in the streets and squares. Coachmen stop the carriages, riders check their horses, and foot passengers stand motionless. Every one suspends his occupation or his conversation, and, kneeling down, with head uncovered, mutters a prayer. But scarcely has the third solemn stroke of the bell ceased to vibrate when the noise and movement are resumed; the brief but solemn stillness of the few preceding moments being thus rendered the more impressive by contrast. The same incident is renewed in the evening between six and seven o'clock, when the bell sounds for the Angelus, (oraciones.) The Cathedral bell gives the signal by three slow, measured sounds, which are immediately repeated from the belfries of all the churches in Lima. Life and action are then, as if by an invisible hand, suddenly suspended; nothing moves but the lips of the pious, whispering their prayers. The *oracion* being ended, every one makes the sign of the cross, and says to the person nearest him, *Buenas noches*, (good night.) It is regarded as an act of courtesy to allow another to take precedence in saying, 'Good night,' and if several persons are together, it is expected that the eldest or the most distinguished of the group should be the first to utter the greeting. It is considered polite to request the person next one to say *Buenas noches*; he with equal civility declines; and the alternate repetition of 'Diza Vm,' (you say it,)—'No, señor, Diza Vm,' (no, sir, you say it,) threatens sometimes to be endless.

"The effect produced by the three strokes of the Cathedral bell is truly astonishing. The half-uttered oath dies on the lips of the uncouth negro; the arm of the cruel Zambo, unmercifully beating his ass, drops as if paralyzed; the chattering mulatto seems as if suddenly struck dumb; the smart repartee of the lively Tapada is cut short in its delivery; the shop-keeper lays down his measure; the artisan drops his tool; and the monk suspends his move on the draught-board: all with one accord join in the inaudible prayer. Here and there the sight of a foreigner walking along indifferently, and without raising his hat, makes a painful impression on the minds of the people."—*Travels in Peru*, by Dr. J. J. Von Tschudi.

As to the concluding remarks of the learned doctor, we would here state that it altogether depends on the mood of the populace whether the sight of indifferent foreigners "merely makes a painful impression," or provokes a riot. To the honor of "our flag" be it said, we have never

* *City of Kings*. (*Ciudad de los Reyes*).—Lima has obtained this high-sounding appellation from the simple fact that it was founded on the day of the Epiphany, in 1534.

† *Angelus*.—Some of our readers may feel disposed to question the accuracy of our description of a scene which Lima actually presents twice every day in the year. We grant that to the untravelled American it may present at first view an air of strangeness and improbability. Nevertheless our

plants of that tropical hot-bed—all knelt down, with one movement and one inspiration—all knelt down and bowed their heads, because it was the hour and the custom; and, our word for it, not a lip was there that did not utter some prayer with what sincere fervor habit and education can inspire.

All were kneeling upon the plaza except Saint Clair. With form erect and eager eyes, he forgot the scene around him; he had but one thought, that of discovering the name and residence of the fair señorita with the bright diamond ring and the brighter black eye. Presently the scandal of his standing up while so many devout Christians were prostrate, began to attract general attention among the kneeling hundreds in his immediate vicinity. First an indistinct murmur broke upon the solemn silence of the hour, then the murmur grew into imprecation and open menace.

"*Sangre de Dios*, down with the foreigner," cried many a voice, whilst many a *puñal* gleamed in the uncertain light. Saint Clair heard and saw; but he was by nature a bold man; and now that he had, as he feared, missed one adventure, he felt no particular objection to a scene, however dangerous, that seemed likely to furnish him with a pretext wherewith to disguise his defeat. Therefore, without heeding the ill-boding exclamations around him, he stood up more proud and erect than ever, with a smile of defiance upon his curling lip.

"For Heaven's sake, señor," whispered a voice at his elbow, which in spite of the growing tumult he heard quite distinctly, "for Heaven's sake, señor, kneel, and do not look at me."

Subjugated as by a charm, the young man obeyed without demur; glancing, however, as he knelt, he caught a view of the features of the speaker. It was now almost dark; but in that short moment, thanks to the light of a stall near by, the image of those features graven itself in his heart never to be effaced. Her silver voice was still ringing in his ear, and, mentally, he repeated her last words, "kneel and do not look at me." Strange to say, the bold, dashing Saint Clair, a skeptic in all holy things, he who but a moment before was following that same maiden through the crowd with no further thought than to beguile an idle hour and to achieve an adventure that he might boast of—Saint Clair felt himself as under the empire of a spell. With something like a religious feeling, he bowed his head as the rest did; mechanically he repeated, in lieu of prayer or orison, the simple words of entreaty which a voice so sweet had uttered; still more mechanically, and as it were against his own will, he obeyed the injunction implicitly; almost meekly he bowed his head and never ventured to look at her; and when, with the rest of the crowd, he sprang to his feet, she was nowhere in sight.

CHAPTER II.

BEING A CHAPTER OF SPECIAL PLEADING.

Plaisante justice qu'une rivière ou une montagne borne! Vérité en deça des Pyrénées erreur au delà.
PENSÉES DE L'ASCAL.

VERILY we who, from inclination or want of experience, do shun the Domestic Novel, and prefer those subjects which give us an opportunity of displaying our travelled lore—

seen an American thus deliberately outraging the feelings of the hospitable Peruvians. Our people seem to have an innate respect for the manners of other nations. They often follow the maxim of "When you are in Rome," &c., to the extent of even appearing to conform with any custom not disreputable in itself. We will not venture to say that they bend the knee in the open streets of Lima when the Host is passing or when

verily we tread upon dangerous ground. Our path lies over quicksands, and pitfalls on either hand beset us innumerable. There is about as much likeness between the manners of the Peruvians and our own, as there

the bells toll for the Angelus, but they at least raise their hats and assume a respectful attitude. Those foreigners who parade their superb and bigoted arrogance, and purposely, as it were, insult the popular feeling by "walking indifferently along," those foreigners, although they may speak our language, come from a far different corner of the globe.

is in the landscapes of the two countries. You might as well compare the Catskill to Chimborazo, or Union Park to Plaza Mayor, as to expect that the standards of right or wrong in vogue under either climate will agree—the Peace Congress not having as yet legislated to any practical purpose.

Therefore fear we that in transporting the reader to the City of Kings, we have done little to dispose him to view our personages with an unprejudiced eye, unless we can likewise persuade him to shift for a while his meridian of propriety.

The white Creoles of Peru are now bearing the legitimate consequences of the crimes of their ancestors. The companions and early successors of Pizarro have handed down to their descendants an inheritance which the latter must long retain. The lordly estates of the old Spaniards have in a great measure disappeared, but the pride of rank and the pride of wealth have survived the causes which produced them. The Creoles no longer form an exclusively privileged class, but the indolence and vanity which exclusive privileges engender still do and long must remain characteristics of their race. The chivalrous and half-barbarous prowess of their military forefathers no longer makes their land the classic ground of romantic adventures; but the habits of despotism, the scorn of letters, and the incapacity for self-improvement still mingle as a taint with the very blood in their veins. The murderous spirit which assailed the empire of the Incas with the dagger, the axe, and the brand, may still be traced, not in deeds of arms, but at the *toro* fight and the *coliseo de gallos*. In fact, the fierce conquerors of Peru, could they now rise from the grave, might still trace their own portraits, miniature-softened, in their descendants, but would smile in scornful derision to behold their own sublime vices so dwarfed and stunted in their posterity.

Yet have they their redeeming traits, these Peruvian Creoles, among which stands prominent temperance, that negative virtue, together with a pleasing and graceful urbanity, a courtly yet dignified refinement of manner, the result of Andalusian affability grafted upon Castilian hauteur. Like their virtues their faults are of a somewhat passive character. Indolent and extravagant, fond of show and pleasure, yet incapable of labor even under the stimulus of poverty, they

present a lamentable picture of heedless profligacy. Their enervating climate, their sultry noons and delicious nights, the unstable earth which rocks daily under their feet, seem to prompt and encourage their reckless disregard of the morrow and their incurable apathy. Uncertain of another sun, they enjoy each day as a respite snatched from the earthquake. The fate of Pompeii has partly visited them more than once, and daily threatens them even now. Therefore, like the gay votaries of pleasure who danced by the Vesuvius' side, they seem anxious quickly to squander a life so uncertain. Is it strange that the land of Atahualpa should have retrograded instead of making progress under a republican form of government,—that form which, above all others, requires public virtue, individual energy, and steadiness of purpose?

On the other hand, the women of Lima present in many respects an obvious contrast to their countrymen. They are shrewd, scheming, bold, and often energetic. The extent of influence which they have achieved for themselves would almost realize the visions of George Sand. Generally gifted with intellects of a superior order, though wholly uncultivated, they excel in conversation, repartee and all the social talents. Their sarcasm is proverbial for keenness. There is no walk of life which they do not invade. In politics, in commerce, and even in war, they often display unrivalled aptitude. Ostentatious and fond of glitter like their lords, they stop at nothing to gratify their love of pleasure. They brave and dare the utmost extremities. Under the impenetrable veil of their national disguise, they boldly visit, unattended, the gambling-house, and lose or win large sums with all the composure of the accomplished caballero. No dread of consequences deters them from the pursuit of any objects they have in view, and if some measure they still observe in their conduct, it is less because they fear scandal than because they love mystery.

We pause in this our general description of the fair Creoles of Lima, to acknowledge the many exceptions to which it must necessarily be subject, and to advert to the fact that Lima has actually furnished one female saint to the Roman Catholic calendar.

To proclaim adequate praise of the personal attractions of these beautiful creatures, would require a thorough union of all the

sister arts. Our unassisted pen can but sketch a few outlines. They have all that fascination of elegant deportment and graceful bearing which poetry has so long attributed to the women of Andalusia. Their dark eyes evolve the most luminous flashes; their cheeks are uniformly pale, but the warm tint of their fair complexions requires not the relief of color; their teeth are invariably perfect, and their sweet lips present in their outlines an expression of mingled caress and sarcasm, flattery and wit, which may be considered as one of their most effective weapons in that warfare which one half of the human race is constantly waging against the other half. Their forms are in a vast majority of cases admirably symmetrical. They pride themselves more particularly on the smallness and proportions of their slender little feet. An enthusiastic French author, travelling in Spain, falls into rapture at the beauty of Andalusian feet, and in his ecstasy resorts to *la finesse du cheval Arabe* for his comparisons. Were he to come to Lima, he would probably be driven to the lama for a simile, or rather cast off all similes in despair. The ladies of Lima are quite conscious of their possessing this favorite point of beauty, and contrive all manner of artifices to set it off. In the most familiar intimacy, on the most trivial occasion, they may be found, half dressed perhaps, but displaying those rich silken integuments of their nether extremities which our modest pen must not name, and which China manufactures—rich return freight crewhile of the semi-annual galleon—for the Peruvian and Mexican markets. Even when rocking in their grass hammocks, they manage to parade one delightful little foot over the side of that comfortable couch. When they pronounce upon the claims of rival beauties—one of their most habitual topics of conversation—be sure that whether their verdict be praise or censure, the foot of the party under criticism always has to undergo a strict and rigid cross-examination. Of a foreigner's claims to loveliness, they are apt to dispose with a pretty toss of the head, and an unanswerable argument *ad pedem*: "She has an English paw," they will say, and pout their scornful lips—*una pataza inglese*. If a lady of condition chooses to sally forth alone on a night adventure, she will remorselessly veil her beautiful face, disguise her graceful form in a tattered *saya*; of her eyes she will allow

but one to see or be seen, close muffling the rest of her face with perhaps the most unaristocratic of faded mantles; all this she may do, but she will watch before going out that her foot is closely fitted in the richest of white silk, and many a mode she will devise upon the way to show as much of it as possible, artfully picking her way where the whole way is clear, and, a-tip-toe, guarding her white satin shoes from imaginary quagmires.

Again we have adverted to the delightful disguise of which we have spoken before. Travellers have described it over and over again, so that it requires no illustration at our hands. One fact, however, we must mention in connection with it. The graceful, picturesque, charming, mysterious *saya y manto* no longer (alas!) belongs to the present. It scarcely exists but as a relic of the past. The husbands of Lima, with denunciations in one hand and Parisian bonnets in the other, have fairly driven it from the place. Formerly a stranger, stopping with his friends at a hotel in Lima, if gifted with an adventurous turn, need but look about him awhile and dart away in pursuit of the first *saya y manto* he perceived with sufficient *disinvoltura* to engage his attention. He might pursue the enticing mask through the defiles of the City of Kings; and if after a long walk he was disappointed in any way—as for instance when the opening *saya* disclosed a faded visage of threescore, or a still more provoking tormentor, after a long test of his pedestrian abilities, slammed a pitiless door into his ridiculous face—he need but saunter about the town, and then return to his hotel, where he might relate to his friends any adventure he had the wit to concoct,—true foundation, believe us, of many a charming adventure which adorns many a page of Peruvian travel. But now-a-days, so fallen is that rich apparel, so forsaken by the better classes, the foreigner addicted to experimental romance may with all safety give chase to its wearers without being compelled to invent the catastrophe.

We have said enough, albeit little we have said, to prepare our readers for a mode of things essentially differing from the status at home. If, for instance, we felt inclined to animadvert upon certain peculiarities of the Peruvian clergy, to show how they share in the general corruption, and neglect all of their charge except its temporalities; if we

were to speak of their innumerable *nephews* and *nieces*, their fighting cocks, their falconries, their exactions, their political intrigues, and their general ignorance, we should have to swell into a volume this chapter on Peruvian ethics. But these and such like circumstances need but be alluded to in explanation of the fearful degeneracy and corruption which has come upon the descendants of the haughty Castilians. As a matter of course, many of the conventionalities wherewith society has in other climates propped up the frail edifice of public virtue, are disregarded here. The marriage tie in particular is shunned by all but certain classes, with whom questions of rank or property make that yoke an unpleasant necessity. In the place of that relation another has sprung up, much resembling that strange domestic institution which the Roman law defines and sanctions by a name once considered proper enough, but now a term of reproach. Here this uncertain social contract prevails without specific legislation, and is known by the name of *compromiso*, (engagement,) or marriage *detrás de la iglesia*, (behind the church.) It involves no scandal, no degradation of either party, and invests the fair one with much of the standing of a wife. Females seem to evince but little repugnance to a *compromiso*; and with cause. Not unfrequently these loose bonds, tightened by habit, age, and progeny, are ulti-

mately riveted by the Church into the chain of matrimony; and so sanguine feel these women of accomplishing this result, that few are found unwilling to enter the preliminary state. They make conditions however, stipulate terms before surrender, are artful, dressy, and very expensive; but faithful—*sic dicitur*. In a contract of this kind, all the advantage would appear, at first sight, to be on the side of the male animal; and so it is in a great measure. Yet by dint of craft, patience, and a species of manœuvring which we will leave our fair readers to define for us, the women of Lima so endear themselves to their unconscious captive, so thoroughly coil themselves around his heart, that victory seldom fails to remain with them.

Thus much we have deemed it necessary to state, in order to warn our untraveller reader not rashly to pronounce judgment, if in these our pages aught should be related at variance with his own standard of decorum. Let him remember that he is abroad. Let him fancy that he is with us on a trip to distant lands. He need no more wonder at tropical usages and ways than tropical vegetation. Haply the manners of the country are somewhat startling and novel; so are cocoa-nut trees and bananas. In other words, if he wishes to journey pleasantly, let him leave all the luggage he can at home, and not travel, like an Englishman, with a bundle of prejudices upon his back.

CHAPTER III.

BEING A RETROSPECTIVE CHAPTER.

BELoved reader—beloved, since thou hast purchased this our book—hast thou ever been the dupo of a good impulse? As an instance, hast thou ever, of a dark night in the autumn, been appealed to in some thoroughfare by a plaintive voice that solicited bread for a sick father, a widowed mother, or several orphan children? Hast thou, in the plenitude of thy benevolence, unbuttoned thy great-coat to fumble for the votive shilling? And after relieving distress so pitiable, much musing the while and ruminating the after taste of charity, hast thou watched, peradventure, and seen the glad proprietor of thy largess limp into the nearest gin-palace, unequivocally preferring

the staff of life in its liquid and potable state? Dost thou remember the feeling of deep disgust wherewith, on such an occasion, thou didst spitefully rebutton the garment aforesaid, vowing never again to heed the counsel of a generous heart? If all this ever did occur to thee, O reader, as to us it hath, then mayest thou entertain some faint conception of the rage of our hero, when, upspringing to his feet, he found our heroine was gone.

Yea, reader, this tale boasts a hero and a heroine. Of the latter we shall say nothing in this place, reserving entirely to ourself the privilege of causing her to reappear when and wherever we elect. Of the for-

mer, while he stands on the plaza, biting his lip and stamping his foot, we have now occasion to say a word. We have already given to understand that he was somewhat tall, somewhat good-looking; let us add that he was about thirty years of age—too old, we fear, for an orthodox hero; but the truth must be told. He was very bold, very shrewd, very fond of adventure—too fond, indeed, for it was whispered in some well-informed circles that he was nothing but an adventurer. We have good reason to know that he was a Frenchman by birth; but unlike many of his countrymen, he did not seem to think that this accident conferred upon him any particular distinction. Indeed he was a true cosmopolite in the spirit; having then lately—and we half love him for it—shot in a duel Don Manuel Iota y Griega, for some remarks that reflected upon the universal Yankee nation.

Who he was, and whence he came, were questions much mooted in Lima; but no satisfactory conclusion had ever been reached. We, who now might, prefer not to throw any light upon his previous career: first, because it is wholly immaterial to the further development of the story; and principally, because we have a fondness for our hero, and feel averse to saying, without good cause, aught that might raise a prejudice against him.

His history, however, since his arrival at Lima, any gossip in that city could give; and as it is short, we will here insert it. Once upon a time, dropping as it were from the clouds, he stopped unheralded at the principal hotel of Lima, where he engaged a sumptuous apartment, and lived in style. To the horror and despair of Tour, the black cicerone, he asked no questions, required no guide, no valet-de-place, but went about the streets, inspected the curiosities, and took rides, like one who knew the place well, and could pilot himself. As he made no visits, sought no acquaintance, yet dressed very well, and staked a handful of ounces on the *caballo* of spades with aristocratic indifference, public curiosity naturally began to take the alarm, and many were the surmises that soon floated upon the surface of society in connection with his name. The most fanciful hypotheses were indulged, the wildest theories set up; and we are not sure that our hero himself would not have been submitted to a downright course of North

American cross-examination had he not fortunately, and without an afterthought, shot Don Manuel in a duel,—a feat which rather raised him in the estimation of that fickle public, and effectually prevented the question direct. But as soon as it became rumored that the mysterious stranger was accredited to Messrs. Alsop & Co., and that those gentlemen discounted his drafts, it is amazing how decidedly the public tide began to set in his favor. Points that heretofore had appeared dark or dubious in his character or his origin, now became so clear as to require no further investigation. His society was courted, cards and notes of invitation were showered upon him, together with small pink communications of a still more flattering import. How charitably we feel inclined towards those who do not seem likely ever to require any favors at our hands.

Such was the standing of our hero when tidings reached Lima that a decisive battle was about to be fought between the candidates for the Presidency. This has been for years a favorite mode of determining a Peruvian election. For instance, a President having once exhausted the patronage of the Government is pronounced to have reigned long enough. Then, without any, the slightest regard to the unexpired term of his office, the influential men, *i.e.*, those out of power, begin mustering their strength for a new election. A party of *montañeros* is organized, and the first mule-load of ingots that happens to venture out of the mining district without sufficient escort, is pounced upon and made the basis of a revolutionary exchequer. An army is then raised, and the election carried *nem. con.*, unless the incumbent or some other candidate can manage to strip a church of its ornamental gold and silver, or in some other manner provide wherewith to feed his troops. Should the latter prove the case, a battle ensues; without much bloodshed, however, except when, as sometimes happens, the *rancheras* or *filles du regiment* who follow either camp elect to take a part in the affray; and then many a scratched face and nasal hemorrhage testifies the valor of those fierce Amazons.

When Saint Clair heard that a battle was about to be fought, he ordered his servant to saddle his charger, a splendid animal of the Chili breed, whose curvets alone had made our hero the envy of many beholders. Soon as Saint Clair reached a point that

commanded a view of the battle-ground, he examined long and critically the position of the two armies, hesitated awhile as to his course, and at last, like one who has solved a problem or taken a satisfactory determination, rode deliberately to the tent of General G——, who was taking his siesta while his wife reviewed the troops.

Our hero offered his services as a volunteer, spread forth certain credentials, was attached to the staff of Mrs. G——, and managed to secure the good opinion of that warlike lady, who thenceforth availed herself of his services on every occasion. At the fiercest period of the conflict, and while the event appeared yet doubtful, he suggested a movement by which the enemy's position might be turned, and leading a small part of the reserve to the charge, succeeded in routing the foe.* The lady was

* Our account of a Peruvian battle may appear fabulously improbable to such of our readers as have little knowledge of the "way such things are done" among our South American brethren. We would refer the incredulous, *passim*, to nearly every account which travellers have vouchsafed us in late years. They will find our views much more than endorsed in that charming work of Madame Flora Tristan on Peru,—a book which ought long ago to have been made accessible to the English public. That talented authoress gives a laughable relation of a great battle fought near Arequipa by two competitors for the Presidency, of which she was nearly an eye-witness. One of her relatives was an officer in one of the contending armies; and as she lived within a short distance of the battle-field, she had ample opportunities of learning the truth. It would seem that on this occasion the *rancheros* took a heroic part in the combat, and that the officers of the victorious army had to travel some forty or fifty miles in pursuit of *their* general, who had run away at the commencement of the conflict. They found the conqueror abjectly hid away in an inglorious retreat. The history of the Roman Emperors alone furnishes a parallel for that ludicrous incident. The chronicles of nearly every nation on the globe present instances of soldiers betaking themselves to flight with little or no cause, particularly when they felt no interest in the issue of the combat, or when they doubted the capacity of their leaders, both which considerations operate generally to damp the ardor of the Peruvian ranks, especially in times of civil war. But it is generally observed, that officers at least, through motives of pride, contrive to make a decent show of personal bravery. Nevertheless there is many a "day of spurs" in the experience even of the bravest nations of the world, to which we might point as a "pendant" to the most ridiculous caricature of an engagement which our imagination could possibly draw. In the absence of mytholo-

not ungrateful. After the contest, she offered him a command in the army or navy, the deed of a silver mine subject to a British mortgage, or finally any thing that he might demand. Saint Clair most wisely declined those tempting offers, and protested that his only ambition was to be accounted her Excellency's most humble servant. By this moderation he won for himself the golden opinions of a host of applicants who dreaded him as a competitor. Only, when Congress met, he petitioned for and readily obtained a charter of privilege and further facilities for the navigation by steam of the coast of Peru.

There were not lacking those who, even while our hero's reputation stood at its zenith point, ventured to assert that the steamers would never exist except in the charter of Congress, and that the author of the scheme was, to say the best of him, a needy projector, whose only aim was to hypothecate his enterprise and leave the country. For,

gical faith, it is somewhat difficult to account for the strange panic terrors which occasionally seize upon large bodies of men, and hurry them along in heedless flight, reckless of shame, officers and men following each other *ut pecus pecudi*.

It may not be altogether flattering to our national vanity, but it is nevertheless true, that several events in our own history might with propriety be set forth as appropriate companion pieces of the most inglorious of Peruvian or Mexican *hazañas*. To say nothing of others, a laughable feat of arms was performed during the last war with Great Britain, which is too good to be told in plain prose. We have made an epic of it, and beg leave to lay it before our readers. It is every tittle true. Many of the principal actors in the farce are still living and can testify. Besides, it is not altogether unrecked of by that grave matron, History.

THE BATTLE OF SACKETT'S HARBOR.

A DOWNRIGHT EPIC.

CANTO FIRST.

Thrice wearied Muse of Epic chaunt, sore veteran of the skies,
From thy well-earned half-pay repose, retreated Muse, arise!

[Oh, no! hold—this will never do. Our vivacious friend is a most *note-worthy* contributor; but this is unreasonable to take, when we give him of our space so much more than an inch, an *ell* to foist upon us an *epic*! It is so well done, however, that when we get safely through his story, if the symptoms of our readers are favorable, we will administer it to them.—*Ed.*]

after all, what was he but an *extrangero*, a foreigner? As well might an individual of the canine race hope to escape his doom after the cry of mad dog has been raised against him, as that a foreigner should expect to rise to public eminence in any of the Spanish Republics without exciting envy and prejudice. The narrow and bigoted policy of the Council of the Indies has survived the sway of Spain over her colonies. Under the mask of patriotism, every obstacle is thrown in the way of the permanent establishment of foreigners, and then a complaint is inconsistently set up that the latter only seek those shores to enrich themselves, and quickly depart with their gains; as if it were likely that a stranger should form any attachment for a soil where the very qualification which he lacks, that of being a *hijo del pais*, is made the condition of preferment. It is the boast of our country to have pursued a far different course; and much of its growth and prosperity may be attributed to that sole cause.

The Spanish tongue is spoken in the largest, richest, and fairest part of the Continents of America. And co-extensively with that language, anarchy, misrule, political degradation, and insignificance, together with the characteristic hatred of foreigners, may be said to prevail. If the latter are not always legislated out of the country, it is because the popular prejudice is deemed

sufficient to prevent their permanent settlement. Appetite for the plunder which the property of thriving foreigners offers, has excited many a revolution, supplied many a pretender with the means of fomenting civil war. True, the State is ultimately mulcted in heavy damages; but provision is no characteristic of the statesmen of those climes. Besides, they trust to "the law's delay." They have not sufficient confidence in their tenure of power to expect that the same administration which has committed a wrong will have to atone. Meanwhile foreign capital seeks other channels, local trade languishes, and the country is thrown back for a quarter of a century. So much for the jealousy of foreigners in young empires.

In spite of all his disadvantages, our hero, by dint of firmness and address, supported as he was by high and powerful patronage, and singularly familiar besides with the idiom and the usages of Peru, succeeded in wearying down his opponents, and of surviving the odious appellation of new man and *extrangero*; in good sooth, he commanded at last as much influence and respect as any foreigner ever obtained in that distracted region. At the presidential palace he was always a welcome visitor, so much so indeed, that it was rumored that the favor shown him by the still beautiful Señora G—— did not spring from gratitude alone.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEREIN OUR HERO TURNS EAVES-DROPPER.

SUCH was the enviable station which Saint Clair had achieved in the polished city of Lima at the time when our story opens. The reader will remember that we left him accusing his destiny in a fit of rage for that he had, by his own fault, lost all trace of his unknown beauty. There would be no end of recounting the follies which he committed on that memorable night. He strode through the plaza, elbowing every body and critically examining each *suya y manto*. He entered uninvited several dwellings, rang his heavy silver spurs upon the sacred marble of the cathedral, followed several figures clad in black, addressed a few, discovered on one occasion an old woman, on another his

laundress, a Samba who laughed in his face, when, in choice Castilian phrase, he asked leave to raise her manto.

Poor Saint Clair! for the first time perhaps in the course of his wild career, he had followed an instinct not purely selfish: he had so far yielded to considerations of delicacy as to obey the gentle injunction of her who knelt by his side on the plaza; and by so doing he had lost every trace of her. He had followed a generous impulse, and the impulse had misled him.

At last, weary with his vain exertions, and half-ashamed of having permitted his disappointment to work so much upon his feelings, he bethought himself of rejoining

his companions, whose good opinion he felt interested in preserving. He had now been wandering about the city for several hours without taking his bearings. He remembered however having crossed Rollo's bridge, and therefore he knew that he was in the suburb of San Lazaro. For a wonder the sky was that night almost without a cloud, and he could see the Southern Cross blazing in the firmament nearly overhead. Guided by that direction as we, in a different hemisphere, might be by consulting the North Star, he sought to retrace his footsteps. A few minutes led him to the Alameda, a beautiful but deserted promenade on the banks of the Rimac.

Here he paused, and muffling himself with his fine lama *poncho*, sat down upon a stone bench. His object seemed to be not so much to rest and collect his excited spirits, as to accomplish some fixed purpose, if one might judge from his occasional marks of impatience and frequent consulting of his watch. He had not been there long when the sound of voices in earnest conversation caught his quick ear. His conscience was not overburdened with scruples; he was not one to hesitate to play the part of a listener, provided he could do so without compromising his outward and apparent dignity. Besides, on this occasion, he was evidently waiting for some one or some thing, and was probably delighted to find an occupation of any kind as a substitute for patience. The sounds appeared to proceed from the bed of the river, a shallow mountain torrent which at this particular spot breaks into many separate streams, divided by small knolls of land, covered generally with rank tropical vegetation. Cautiously Saint Clair crept down to the sandy beach below; silently he advanced, masking his progress as best he could, and at last gained a position where, concealed by a group of banana trees, he could see the speakers and overhear their conversation.

Standing on a small island in the middle of the stream were two persons distinctly visible in the full moonlight. One wore a clerical habit; the other was a short, ill-made youth, dressed with affected care. After reconnoitring, our hero muttered to himself:

"Why, that is nothing but Ramon Casauran, the greatest fop and ugliest monkey in Lima. But who is the priest? I thought I knew all the Dominicans in this town."

The person first described in our hero's

soliloquy was also the first whose voice became audible to the concealed listener. In a somewhat shrill yet mincing and affected tone, he spoke:

"Would it please you, Padre Francisco, to inform me wherefore you chose to appoint this dreadfully damp place for our rendezvous? It would have afforded me much more satisfaction to meet with your reverence at the house of some of your fair penitents."

"I had especial cause," answered the other; "but of this by-and-by; meanwhile I have something of much consequence to impart."

"Speak on," answered the youth, playing with his riding whip and bowing half disrespectfully; "speak on, Father."

"You must know that your beautiful cousin, Doña Paula, has escaped from our hands."

"Escaped! with whom?" eagerly cried the youth.

Saint Clair fancied that the tone in which this question was spoken was expressive of bitter jealousy and disappointed love. The priest replied:

"I do not exactly mean that she has left the sacred walls of Santa Maria de Trujillo for ever. You know, my son, that her novitiate is soon to expire. She insisted previous to taking the veil that she should be permitted to see her father. She threatened if refused to decline before the whole assembled church. Such a scandal could not be permitted. Therefore, after consulting with me, our Lady Abbess consented to her going to Lima, Don Antonio de Silva not being, as you know, in a condition to repair to Trujillo."

Don Ramon had listened with great interest to this account. For a moment he seemed lost in his reflections; at last he addressed the priest:

"I cannot see," he remarked, "what great harm there is in all this."

"Indeed!" sneeringly said the Padre. "I see only this: Don Antonio de Silva is very old. He is very fond of his only daughter. If she sees him, she will prevail upon him in all probability to permit her to leave the convent on the ground of imperfect vocation. In that case, one Don Ramon Casauran, now heir presumptive to a splendid estate, would find himself——"

"Fortunately," interrupted the young man with something like irony in his tone, "most fortunately, it happens that my interest in

this matter is identical with that of our Holy Mother the Church. If Don Ramon loses his inheritance, the convent of Santa Maria will lose a rich dowry, and a certain bond of Don Ramon to Padre Francisco de la Mota will be void for want of performance of the condition precedent. Nevertheless, I am ready and willing to second any efforts you may deem necessary to remedy the evil."

It would seem that there was much force in these remarks, for the priest lowered his head and answered nothing. It would seem also that Don Ramon was conscious of having disposed of the subject, for with an air of bantering raillery he again addressed his clerical listener:

"You have not yet informed me, Padre Francisco, wherefore you appointed this very disagreeable place for our meeting."

"As to that," answered the Padre, "you need but wait half an hour to learn, through your own eyes, the reason of my selecting this spot. You know that the Government has lately been defrauded to an alarming extent by the secret exportation of silver and gold. Heavy rewards have been offered; parties of *serenos* have been stationed to watch every avenue that leads to the seaboard. Nevertheless the nefarious trade is so well organized, that no clue has yet been obtained. Yesterday a Sambo revealed to me that mule-loads of silver-bars were sent down from a secret *dépôt* with which he was not acquainted, and that the bed of the Rimac had been chosen as the only road that was neither suspected nor guarded, probably because it seemed impossible to travel over it. To-night a convoy is to pass this way. Do you understand now, Señor Don Ramon?"

It would appear that Saint Clair had become highly interested in the latter part of this discourse. With what motive we will leave the reader to guess, he drew from his pocket a double-barrelled pistol, and taking deliberate aim, fired directly over the heads of the speakers. Astounded at the report, they betook themselves to flight. Don Ramon Casauran, under-sized and ill-formed as he was, distinguished himself by the rapidity of his motions. Leaping from island to island across the river, he was soon out of sight. But

the priest, entangled in his long robe and closely pursued by our hero, stumbled and fell into a narrow arm of the river. Before he could recover himself Saint Clair's nervous grasp was upon him.

"Misericordia!" screamed the affrighted Padre.

"Silence!" whispered his pursuer. "Answer me one question, and answer truly, or thy lifeless body will float down yonder rapids. Who was the Sambo that told thee of the Rimac's mysteries?"

"El Chato Encarnacion," answered he.

"Well, go thy ways," scornfully rejoined our hero, partly releasing his hold; "but first tell me thy name."

"Francisco de la Mota," stammered the priest, in that convincing tone which terror supplies.

Padre Francisco was too much terrified not to avail himself quickly of the permission. Saint Clair, left alone, turned his steps up the stream. After he had progressed about half a mile in his difficult march, he stopped and searched the dark gorge of the Rimac with an anxious and piercing glance. Presently he saw a blue light flash for an instant and disappear. He repaired to the spot. Three or four mules with muffled hoofs were treading the dangerous defile, led or guarded by twice that number of men. The utmost silence prevailed. A peculiar whistle from Saint Clair brought the whole party to a halt. One of the mule-drivers advanced towards him.

"Where is El Chato?" inquired our hero.

"At Lima, señor, waiting for us," was the response.

"He is waiting there to betray you," said Saint Clair, with ominous calmness. "The wretch has informed. Retrace your steps, and take the road to Miraflores. As to Encarnacion, let him be dealt with according to custom."

These few hurried orders being given, our hero made the best of his way to the bank of the river. Thence through the magnificent solitude of the Alameda, and the bustling suburb of San Lazaro, he gained the far-famed bridge of Rollo, and without any further adventure found himself at the portal where he had left his party.

CHAPTER V.

BEING A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF SOME MYSTERIES OF LIMA.

Où ! l'or n'est qu'une chimère !—ROBERT LE DIABLE.
Le hazard ce seul dieu qu'adorât son audace.—LAMARTINE.

OUR hero's friends were no longer under the portal ; but he knew where to find them. He proceeded at once to a certain well-known establishment, the true name of which any pilgrim to that holy land of pleasure will at once suggest with a smile expressive of many and varied recollections, although we elect to call it by the title of *Bala de Plata*. A flight of stairs and a long narrow passage led Saint Clair to a large room, where a numerous assemblage stood or sat on one side of a green table, whilst, on its other side, a banker and a dealer expounded the oracles of Fate to such applicants as laid their offerings at the deity's shrine, viz., four pieces of thin pasteboard painted with curious Spanish figures, the very counterpart, we believe, of those imported into France to amuse the helpless lunacy of Charles VI. To be explicit, they were playing *monté*, or rather, one of the varieties of *monté* ; for this name seems to apply to all the national modes of gambling in Spanish countries. At least, we have never witnessed any game of chance in any American region where the Castilian tongue prevailed, that was not called *monté*, excepting perhaps some lately imported French improvement in the science of play. We would ask etymologists to give us the history of that word, and inform us through what chain of remote analogies it might perhaps trace its origin to the famous papal institutions by which the Court of Rome sought, in by-gone days, to replenish the ecclesiastical exchequer. We mean the *luoghi di monté*, prolific parents, they say, of many a gambling establishment on a larger scale. Why not sponsors also of those humbler stock-exchanges, the *monté-banks* ? The room which Saint Clair now entered presented a lively appearance. Several tables, groaning with the weight of choice liquors and all the delicacies of the season, seemed spread as if on purpose to console the unfortunate gambler, or to nerve him to further attempts. Well-dressed females flitted about the room, addressing to each one in

turn a word of flattery or encouragement, whilst the convenient *saya y manto* served to disguise many an aristocratic votary of the attractive deity, Fortune, whose pernicious altars nowhere perhaps are so numerous or so well attended as in cities like Lima, where that worship is prohibited by law.

Saint Clair recognized there all the individuals with whom he had been conversing under the portal, when the occurrence we have related called him away so suddenly. The weather-beaten old lieutenant, whose pay supported a family at home, was there with the rest ; but he did not play ; he never indulged in luxuries requiring an investment ; he stood by a side table, cramming his capacious stomach with the gratuitous viands ready spread before him. He was enjoying a good supper on the strength of his having entered the room with others who played. The young nobleman, on the contrary, sat directly opposite to the banker, with one elbow upon the green cloth, while his other hand was actively engaged in piling up his winnings, or disposing his stakes in some of the various ways, which, though incomprehensible to the new beginner, are full of meaning for the experienced gambler. The young man was visibly quite excited ; his quizzing-glass hung useless upon his bosom. He was not at all short-sighted now.

Behind him stood the American midshipman. We know him as yet only by his nickname of Crocket, which, being as good an appellation as any other, we will still continue to apply to him. The young man appeared somewhat disappointed. His expressive physiognomy had settled into something like a pout. Still he watched the game, with his hands in his pockets, evidently finding nothing there.

Towards the latter our hero directed his steps, after surveying the anxious faces around him with feelings that the cynic smile upon his lip sufficiently explained.

"You have been losing?" said he, in his blindest tone.

"Only my month's pay," answered Crockett, striving to appear indifferent, though, in spite of his efforts, his manner betrayed vexation.

"Do you feel disposed to make another attempt?"

"No; I'm not in luck to-night. Besides, I don't know where to find the purser just now."

"Well, my young friend, suffer me to be your purser for a short time. Stake this ounce on that king."

The young midshipman acted as he was directed, and to his amazement, by following the instructions of his friend, he found himself a winner to a considerable amount. He followed his Mentor to a side table, and after returning to him the loan he had volunteered—

"Saint Clair," said he, "you must be a witch."

"Not at all, my dear fellow; I am only a man of the world. The main difference between us is, that I have bought experience, and that you are now paying for the first lessons of your apprenticeship."

"Nevertheless," answered the youth, somewhat nettled, "I have to thank you for your loan and your advice."

"I am glad you like my advice, as I have determined to give you some more. My friend,"—here his voice and manner became indescribably impressive,—"my dear friend, never play."

"Thank you; you are very moral to-night." The young man spoke these words in a tone which he attempted to make bantering, but which testified that the remark of our hero had produced an effect. The careless young sailor would have accepted, without wincing, a whole broadside of arguments to the same effect from his captain, or any person whose duty it might be to guide and admonish. But here was a man of the world, a notorious gambler, a dashing character, a votary of pleasure and dissipation; was it he, now turned lecturer, who would warn a friend from the path he himself had followed so long, and if report belied him not, so successfully? A remonstrance from such a source was well calculated to attract attention; there was, therefore, much bewildered astonishment in the young man's tone, as, looking up to his friend, he said, "You are very moral to-night."

"I am not any more so to-night than at any other time," quietly answered Saint Clair. "I have another reason, a worldly reason, for thus advising you: a very young man ought never to play; young men furnish the odds in favor of the bank; they are invariably dupes and victims, until, at their own expense, they sometimes learn to victimize others. My friend, I would wish you to be neither victim nor victimizer—play no more!"

"Why," replied the youth, reddening as he spoke, "do you think that they cheat?"

"I will not pretend to say whether they do or not. For my own part, I always play as if I knew they did. That is the secret of your success to-night. Your stakes were small, and always on a neglected card; it was the banker's interest that you should win every time; yet I dare say that it was all the result of chance alone. Shall we try a glass of Italia punch?"

These last words, added evidently for the purpose of shifting the conversation, were uttered in no very loud tone; and yet, such are the sympathetic affinities which a ruling passion supplies, the gray-headed lieutenant, who was passing at a short distance, caught the words at once.

"Italia punch," cried he, as he came up; "certainly; when mixed ship-shape, Italia punch makes capital grog."

We will here cheerfully endorse the statement of the experienced veteran. We believe that some publicans of the first class in New-York parade, in their lists of potable exotics, the tempting announcement of Italia punch. But we deny that the thing itself, in its genuine perfection, ever was accessible to a New-York public. Let but the right kind of Italia punch be once brewed for the discriminating connoisseurs of Manhattan, and cognac will fall in the market; the three great whiskeys will be at a discount.

It would seem that the Italia punch in question was really "ship-shape," to judge from the large quantities which our friend the lieutenant imbibed; and it would seem, moreover, that its effluvia excited a sort of magnetic attraction, for the same group which we introduced to the reader at the opening of this story was soon gathered around the smoking concoction. Glass after glass was drained; healths were proposed, and witticisms were perpetrated. These we spare our readers, because, all the world

over, young men in their cups generally act precisely in the same manner.

"I have the morning watch to keep," remarked the young nobleman; "I must start at once for Callao."

"Say the word, ship-mate, and we'll get under weigh," hiccoughed the gray-headed veteran.

"Surely, gentlemen," interposed Saint Clair, "you do not dream of riding to Callao at this hour of the night. Croeket, were you going to join these gentlemen?"

"The youngster need not go on our account," remarked his lordship. "We are going though."

"You expose your lives wilfully," answered Saint Clair, who really appeared anxious. "Let me entreat you to stay over night."

"What is it that alarms you?" inquired the youthful midshipman. "For my part, I had rather meet the robbers than otherwise."

"So had we," rejoined the titled officer.

"Meet them and board them," added his technical friend.

At this moment a young man entered the room, and beckoned Saint Clair aside.

"Is it done?" eagerly inquired the latter.

"It is," said the stranger; "I come to ask your further orders."

After a moment's reflection, Saint Clair answered in a whisper:

"Let him be placed where Padre Francisco de la Mota will be sure to see him in the early morning."

Our hero's friends, heated with punch and the excitement of their projected *night-errantry*, paid no attention to this *aparte*, and left the room without taking leave of him. The three officers were soon in the saddle, and galloping towards Callao.

They had proceeded but a short distance when a well-mounted horseman overtook them. It was no other than our hero himself.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEREIN AN OFFICER OF THE BRITISH NAVY GETS HIS NOSE PULLED WITHOUT HAVING OCCASION TO RESENT IT.

SAINT CLAIR, mounted upon his fiery Chilian horse, presented a perfect type of the Peruvian *caballero*. He had adopted the costume and gear of the country in all particulars, wisely judging that fashion should not be arbitrarily uniform, but bend according to the exigencies of the climate, and that the judgment and experience of the natives qualified them to decree what style of dress was best adapted to the local requirements. In pursuance of these principles, he wore on the present occasion a broad-brimmed slouched hat which almost concealed his features, a large *poncho* made of the choice wool of the *lama*, and dyed red; of the same material were his capacious leggings, which buckled high above the knee. His saddle was of that clumsy but convenient make most in vogue in the country; his spurs and stirrups were of massive silver, while his holsters contained the identical pistols which had shot Don Manuel.

Thus accoutred and prepared, he was a most valuable acquisition for our little party, by whom he was greeted as enthusiastically

as Wellington by his countrymen when he returned crowned with the accidental laurels of Waterloo. He found his friends in high spirits and prepared for any encounter. Indeed, such wonderful effects had the Italia punch produced that they seemed desirous of meeting an army of footpads.

It is not our intention that they shall be disappointed. We wish to prepare the nerves of our fair readers for the event, and guard them from undue agitation. Indeed, at the date of our story it would have been deemed an occurrence of extraordinary character, if a party, having announced publicly an intention of taking that dangerous journey at night, had failed to meet with the *montañeros*. The road our party were following was admirably calculated for ambuscade and surprise. It was the decayed phantom of that magnificent avenue laid out without regard to cost by the wealthy successors of Pizarro. For several miles it is bordered by double rows of beautiful shade trees. The traveller might ponder long to find a suitable excuse for such a display of

umbrage in a land where the sun is seldom seen. He might conclude at last that these trees were planted merely for the sake of ornament, unless he were informed that they were laid out by a Viceroy of Peru whose name was Don Antonio O'Higgins, an *Irishman*.

On either hand for a considerable distance from Lima this beautiful thoroughfare is bounded by regular walls which inclose orchards and gardens. But as our travellers proceeded, the road and the country around assumed a desolate appearance. Of the walls and trees that once stood there, nothing was left but suspicious thickets and heaps of rubbish, which furnished the robbers with convenient hiding places. At intervals, thin streams of water crossed the road; scanty vestiges of a vast and comprehensive system of artificial irrigation, by means of which the Incas had succeeded in making the now desolate plain of Lima one of the most productive spots upon the earth. The barbarian neglect of their European successors has suffered this prodigious monument of *scientific* enterprise to become almost useless; but in spite of Time and Gothic recklessness, such was the Cyclopean character of those works, that enough remains to excite the wonder of travellers. And even at this day, it would require but little outlay to make the rich valley of Lima smile again in loveliness, by restoring those structures which would compare favorably with any architectural triumph of Man against Nature. Our travellers had many proofs of this fact before their eyes. Wherever these ill-fed gullies supplied the moisture which the dry though rich soil of that volcanic country unfortunately lacks, you could trace their course through the barren plain in long lines of strong, healthy verdure, showing what labor and care might accomplish for a country which now imports its breadstuffs. Altogether it was as dreary a path as the imagination can conceive. By the imperfect light of the moon, not a building was in sight, nor was it possible to discern the faintest trace of cultivation. The little party had progressed heedlessly, and conversing in a loud tone, some five or six miles of their journey, when they came to a spot admirably calculated for the highwayman's ambush. They had just crossed a marshy ground, formed by the decay of one of these channels which were dug in former

days to distribute the waters of the Rimac through the plain, and they entered a section of the road where the deep sand compelled them to walk their horses; so that their retreat and their advance would, in case of need, prove equally difficult. On either side large heaps of fallen *adobes* from the ruined walls, and clusters of low bushes, threw dark heavy shades in the moonlight; while at the right, and in the direction where the noisy Rimac's voice might occasionally be heard whenever the trade-wind lulled for an instant, the ground was covered with high, tangled vegetation, where a giant variety of the fern species prevailed, and which presented great facilities for a masked advance and a retreat.

Saint Clair requested his friends to come to a halt, and addressed them in a low voice:

"We shall be attacked in the neighborhood of this place, or not at all. Let us be ready. Look to your pistols. See that your girths are tight, and make as little noise as possible."

The fumes of Italia punch had now so far evaporated as to allow a glimmering of reason to find its way into the minds of those Saint Clair was addressing; therefore, without answering a word, but simply obeying through that instinct which teaches men to follow in the hour of need those who are willing and able to lead, they acted as he had directed, and the whole party advanced for a short distance in serried order, when Saint Clair, who was a little in advance, cried out to his comrades to halt.

Again they obeyed, although they could perceive no cause for the command, and our hero rode ahead alone. He had hardly proceeded a few yards, when suddenly each bush and fallen wall, each stone and thicket, revealed a human form, and weapons of different kinds glittered in the moonlight.

"Alta!" cried a loud clear voice, and our hero checked his uneasy steed.

The party in the rear now observed his motions with the utmost anxiety, prepared to offer a stout resistance. Each held a pistol in his right hand, his sword made fast to his wrist by the sword-knot, while they secured themselves in their saddles, expecting the command to charge to come from their self-instituted leader.

Meanwhile they saw Saint Clair coolly rein in his fiery charger, and stand there for

a few instants, a fair mark for many levelled weapons which they saw peering from every hiding spot around him. Presently a man on foot approached him, exchanged a few words with him, and suddenly took off his sombrero and began listening in a most respectful attitude. Saint Clair, on the other hand, maintained a lofty port, and with his riding-whip pointed as he spoke to a certain cluster in the distance. In this direction the man disappeared, and after a few minutes returned, accompanied by a personage on horseback. This individual approached our hero, and the two withdrew together to a short distance, conversing earnestly the while.

It was not long before the stranger issued a command in an unknown tongue, (the ancient language of the Incas,) accompanied by a loud shrill whistle, and suddenly level weapons and armed men all disappeared as if by magic, and shrunk back into their former hiding-places, and the road was silent and deserted as before.

Saint Clair rode back to his party, and informed them that they now had the way clear before them. They were not slow in availing themselves of the privilege, and spurring their horses they galloped towards the ancient city of Callao, whose circular castles began to be visible in the distance. His friends were delighted with their good luck; the nobleman remarked that our hero was "a trump;" the gruff old lieutenant chuckled, and expressed an opinion that he had got "the weather-gage of that squadron." Crocket simply observed that they had been fortunate. He did not praise the diplomacy exerted on the occasion; but although he said little, it was evident that he thought a great deal, for he appeared to treat his former friend with something like suspicious reserve. After the first explosion was over, they began to inquire into the immediate causes of the peaceful retreat of the banditti.

"What did you say to them?" inquired the young British officer.

"What *traverse* did you work?" chimed in the gray-headed sea-dog.

"Simply this, gentlemen," answered their deliverer; "I informed them that you were officers in the British Navy coming from, not going to Lima; and from this circumstance, like men of sense, they inferred, it appears, that you could have nothing left about you that was worth taking."

This reply, despite its ironical tone, seemed to give general satisfaction. Persons in similar circumstances are not given to exercising their causality over much. The gruff lieutenant in particular appeared to be exceedingly pleased. He chuckled over the trick all the way to Callao, commenting upon the event in his characteristic phraseology.

"Sailed under false colors, eh?"—"Showed the wrong papers to the boarding officer"—"Made believe the prize wasn't worth the capture"—"Wonder if the foreigner will charge us salvage?" Such, and many like expressions, which fell audibly from his lips at intervals, showed conclusively how highly he relished the stratagem.

Without further mishap they reached the city of Callao, where falling in with another party of belated revellers, they joined in the intellectual pursuit of putting the town "in stays," as Jack would term it; after which they bribed the guard-boat to leave the young nobleman on board of his ship, admirably prepared, we fancy, to keep his morning watch.

It is no part of our plan to follow the remainder of the party through the incidents of the latter part of the night. We trust and believe that Saint Clair and his youthful friend retired like quiet and moral men to the nearest accessible bed, and there slept off the excitement of the night. But we feel interested in the fortunes of the aged lieutenant, and will follow in his wake until we see him drop anchor.

That experienced sailor no sooner found that his convoy had parted company than he steered for the mole, probably in some vague anticipation of finding there a man-of-war's boat. After making "short tacks" from one end of the street to the other, and "grounding" several times—as he himself expressed it in his low grumbling soliloquy—he "came to" at the head of the mole between two enormous mounds of wheat that lay there without the needless protection of a roof. The necessity of storing grain, our readers will remark, is here obviated from the double fact that it hardly ever rains in this climate, and that there are no birds in the neighborhood that would feed upon the hoarded treasure. Here our weather-beaten friend "cast anchor," as he himself qualified the action of dropping heavily upon the leeward side of one of those hills of wheat.

The accumulated grain, disturbed at its base, immediately obeyed the law of gravitation, and began to slide, until the belated wayfarer, who was already asleep, became entirely covered up.

The sun rose afterwards, and the vigilant sentry who guarded the head of the mole, perceiving something of a red color protruding from the side of one of the conical heaps of wheat under his charge, began to poke it with the end of his bayonet. The thing having manifested some signs of un-

easy vitality under this harsh process, the soldier approached to survey it more closely. He seized the object of his curiosity between his thumb and index, and pulled it with all his might; when, lo! there arose from the avalanche of grain, first the head, then the body, and next the limbs of a human form, following its nose, which was still held by the astonished Peruvian sentry.

And thus it occurred that an officer in the British Navy got his nose pulled without having occasion to resent it.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEREIN OUR HERO IS PILOTED TO SOME PURPOSE BY A FUNERAL PROCESSION.

WE have expressed a hope that Crocket and the indefatigable hero of these pages had, after a night so full of adventures, sought the repose which they needed so much. But it would seem that, at least as regards the latter, this hope was rather more charitable than well founded. However this may be, the same gray dawn that witnessed the outrage perpetrated upon the proboscis of an officer in H. B. M.'s Navy, saw Saint Clair approaching the walls of Lima.

His countenance, habitually pale, did not seem in the least altered from his exertions of the previous night; and attired as he was in the picturesque riding-dress of the country, he presented on his gay charger his usual dashing appearance.

Yet to judge from the indolent habits of the fair inhabitants of that luxurious city, there seemed but little likelihood of his exciting any admiration at that early hour of the morning, save, perhaps, in the unsophisticated bosoms of sambas and market women.

He now entered the gate and began wending his way through those deserted streets where scarcely a human being was in sight, save here and there a straggling *sereno*, weary with watching over the safety of the slumbering city; or a peasant woman *bestriding* a grave-looking donkey, half sinking under the accumulated weight of the Amazon and her stock in trade of vegetables and poultry; or else the matutinal convict-gang, guarded by an armed inspector, and sweeping the dust of the streets into heaps in readiness for a cart which followed, dragged by other convicts.

This was no hour for pleasure or promenade—no hour even for adventure—no hour for sauntering idly about the streets, pausing at every grated window behind whose bars a female titter is heard; for the purpose of *reguardar la reja*, (looking at the railing,) as the not unusual practice of peeping into a window is pleasantly called in Lima by a considerate use of the figure Metonymy. Neither was our hero abroad thus early on any similar errand. In truth he had ordered some stern business done, and he wished to see with the master's eye that it had been well done.

He now rode in the direction of the convent of San Domingo, one of the richest religious establishments in the country, whose lofty steeple towered above the low houses that line the streets through which he had yet to pass. This is one of those showy structures which, seen from the sea in connection with the white walls and terraced roofs of Lima, produce an effect rarely witnessed except upon the stage.

When he reached the convent, he found a considerable crowd gathered round the entrance door. From the animated gestures of the by-standers, it was easy to perceive that something unusual had occurred. Our hero soon ascertained the particulars, and was rather surprised that an event by no means unprecedented, or even rare in the capital, should have excited so much commotion. The body of a murdered man had just been discovered stretched across the main entrance of the Convent of San Domingo.

The body was that of a poor Indian, and of the by-standers by far the greater number were also Indians. Their countenances, habitually morose and sullen, wore on this occasion an expression of vindictive fierceness. In general they preserved their characteristic taciturnity, although as our hero rode up to the outer edge of the crowd, he overheard some remarks in the sonorous *Quichua*, (the ancient language of the Incas,) expressive of deep feeling and resentful indignation.

The Indian population of Peru is widely different from that on our part of the continent. It retains and cherishes recollections of an aboriginal civilization which the semi-Spanish substitute it now enjoys atones for but indifferently. When Pizarro invaded the dominions of the Incas, he found there a systematic and highly wrought order of society. The Indian monarchs had wielded for ages their absolute sceptre in a manner so searching, yet beneficent, that the whole empire and its inhabitants were reduced to a level with the most perfect and wonder-working machinery. Every act of private life, as well as every public contingency, was regulated by laws skillfully framed to confer the greatest possible comfort to the individual, and at the same time to eradicate the last symptom of independence from the minds of the people. The whole country was divided into districts, where some specific occupation, best suited for the climate and the local genius, was devised and enforced, not so much by penalties as by a strict yet patriarchal method, whose admirable operation Fourier might have envied. The produce of labor was so distributed that want or famine was impossible. Commerce there was none, for no currency existed. Labor, the Incas had discovered, was the sweetener of life, as well as a safety-valve for the bad passions which disorganize society; and therefore they had contrived to accustom their subjects to constant but moderate labor, by means of what has been considered a source of discord and anarchy—agrarianism.

In the mountainous districts where agriculture was impossible, the native flocks of the country were tended by a pastoral population, or the precious metals were extracted from the mines. From the remoter fastnesses, the wild tribes of the forest furnished warriors for the ever-active armies of the Incas; while on the coast range, and

wherever the soil admitted of improvement, colossal structures for artificial irrigation, whose remains are still the wonder of the traveller, converted the dry land of Peru into a beautiful garden. There, in the midst of plenty and content, and provided with all the conveniences and comforts which art can supply, their peaceful subjects realized the dreams of the Golden Age. The whole working of the system gave a practical proof that, UNDER A DESPOTIC GOVERNMENT, the principle of association *can* be applied to social life according to the schemes of sundry modern reformers.

This distribution of labor produced, if indeed it was not suggested by, a corresponding difference in the character of the population. On the coast and on the lower mountains which approach it, in the midst of a rural or pastoral people, the Spaniards met with but little opposition; while the warlike tribes that roamed in comparative freedom over the greater part of the Peruvian territory, have never completely acknowledged the supremacy of the white race. At times since the conquest, the invader's power has penetrated certain interior districts, and cultivated considerable sections under the cover of an armed force, or the still more efficient protection of the mild and persuasive propagandism of the Franciscan monks. But the moment the soldiers were withdrawn, or the fierce and overbearing Benedictines took the place of their gentle predecessors, a sudden irruption of Indians would overwhelm the growing settlement, and leave a hideous ruin in its stead.

Thus the beautiful Montaña of Vitoe has been many times partially redeemed from the wilderness, and suddenly restored to its primeval state. The barbarous system of *Repartimientos* thinned the numbers of the aborigines; the still more rapacious *Mita* reduced them to want; but neither these nor the mortification of defeat have ever completely quelled the Indian spirit. Insurrections and conspiracies without number have, within the last half century, fully attested this fact. The superior discipline of the whites invariably prevailed over their half-naked antagonists. But the latter have recently made immense progress. The long struggle for independence between Peru and the mother country has taught them the use of fire-arms and the secret of their previous defeats. Their mountains abound in materials for gunpowder, and the

day may yet come when the descendants of the Incas will again rule over the land which Pizarro deluged with innocent blood. They preserve perseveringly such remnants of their ancient polity as yet remain amongst them. They venerate the reputed descendants of their former monarchs; they yield a ready obedience to officers whose authority rests only upon tradition and customs. They affect and cherish their old customs; their dances and their songs are all significant of a mournful regret for the past. And in their dress they prefer above all other colors their own *blue* badge of mourning. In fact, after three centuries of degradation and misery, the national sentiment of the Peruvian Indians is nearly as strong as it was when Balboa first spurred his fiery charger into the waves of the Pacific. As yet they are content with nursing that sentiment in silence, their gloomy physiognomies alone expressing the habitual brooding and melancholy recollections of the Helot; but another Tapac Amaru may some day rise among them.

Saint Clair noticed with some anxiety the dark and vindictive countenances of the Indians assembled around the gate of San Domingo. By the side of those melancholy stoics, the gesticulating mulatto and chattering negress presented an obvious contrast. These expressed their feelings with a warmth of manner sometimes affecting, sometimes ludicrous.

"Pobre Encarnacion!" cried one in a dolorous voice.

"Aquel Chato!" cried another querulously; "I always said he would come to that. He went out too much o' nights. He had too many friends among the miners for his own good."

These and similar expressions were silenced by the approach of Padre Francisco, who, issuing from an inner door, began haranguing the multitude in a very authoritative tone, and with manifest disgust in his manner. He concluded a brief speech with sundry

summary orders in relation to the removal of the corpse, and suiting the action to his words, commenced belaboring the bystanders nearest to him, until he had pretty effectually cleared the entrance gate.

This indecent haste compared unfavorably with the decorous demeanor of the spectators as they opened to make way for those who bore the corpse, and respectfully formed themselves to follow in the rear of the procession. Our hero marked the direction of the melancholy march, and when it had disappeared in a cross street, concluded to follow at a distance.

It stopped at the door of one of the most stately mansions in the capital. Saint Clair carefully marked the number. It is no part of our plan to explain his feelings at this particular juncture. None were visible in his outward appearance. Satisfied apparently with his survey, he was about to retrace his steps, when, chancing to look at the upper balcony, he caught a glance of a figure which engrossed all his attention.

It was a beautiful female half concealed behind the gorgeous curtains, and gazing on the scene below with grief and horror vividly depicted upon her expressive countenance.

For several minutes our hero remained looking upon this beautiful apparition with eyes half dimmed by the conflict of various and overpowering emotions. She had not seen him yet, at least he thought so, nor did he wish that she should at this time. His conscious soul would have shrunk under the pure ray of her glance. Conquering his violent agitation by a strong effort of his vigorous will, he turned sadly away, muttering to himself as he rode along:

"This, then, must be Doña Paula—beautiful Paulita! Old Silva is very wealthy. That infernal priest—that profligate Casauran! I will thwart them yet. That this poor Indian should have been her father's dependent—perhaps her own foster brother! There is a fate in this!"

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEREIN THIS TRUTHFUL STORY WAXETH PATHETIC.

No man is more free from this passion (sorrow) than I, who neither like it in myself nor admire it in others.
MONTAIGNE.

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CHAPTER IX.

A LOVE SCENE.

Chi può dir com' egli è in picciol' fuoco.
(No little loves who can explain his love.)—PETRARCH.

* * * * *

CHAPTER X.

WHEREIN IT IS SHOWN HOW DONA PAULA DE SILVA FOREGOES THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

"Thy days shall pass in pence
'Mid counted beads and countless prayer,
To bid the sins of others cease,
Thyself without a crime or care."—BYRON—*The Giaour*.

* * * * *

CHAPTER XI.

WHEREIN THIS TRUE STORY COMES TO A DEAD HALT.

"Brevity is the soul of Wit."

WE trust, gentle reader, that the last three chapters have proved neither tedious nor wearisome to you. It was with a feeling of mournful regret that we struck out all but their titles. They were constructed after the most approved style of modern novels. They gradually unfolded the difficulties of our chief personages, and prepared you for the final catastrophe with a circumstance of dramatic effect which Dumas might have envied. Besides, they contained all the wooing which our pages could boast; for our hero was a man of action as you have seen, and action was also a characteristic of our heroine, as you may or may not see hereafter. Had the three condemned chapters been left for your perusal, you would have found how Doña Paula de Silva (the very girl, as you have shrewdly guessed, whom our hero chased on the plaza and afterwards saw at a balcony one morning) vainly pleaded with her bigoted old father to be allowed to peril her soul among the breakers of the world; how the aged dotard insisted upon mooring the precious craft within the harbor of the Church; how his purpose nearly failed him when the sweet creature fell crying at his feet; and how he was induced to smother his emotions by the artful manœuvring of his selfish kinsman Don Ramon and of Padre Francisco—the very individuals, strange to say, whom Saint Clair overheard planning their damnable intrigues on the banks of the Rimac.

You would have seen how the adventurous Saint Clair clambered one night to the bower of his ladye love; how she strove to appear indignant, and only succeeded in appearing alarmed; how he calmed her fears, and told his love; and how she half confessed her own, yet refused to fly because she dreaded her father's anger, well knowing that of all prejudice, religious prejudice is the most unforgiving. You would have shed a tear at their sorrowful leave-taking that night; but when the fatal hour had come for the procession to begin its way towards the convent of Santa Maria de Trujillo, where was situate the living tomb to

which our heroine was to be consigned; and when the procession was attacked on its way by armed banditti, when the litter which contained the beautiful Doña Paula was forcibly opened, and the leader of the brigands discovered himself to the fair prisoner as her own enamored knight in disguise, and the fair prisoner refused to be released from her dreadful fate and to fly with her rescuer, and deliberately pressed forward on her melancholy journey rather than incur the irrational ire of her sire, our word for it you would have sobbed outright.

The interest of this veritable story would have been raised to the melodramatic pitch, if we had told you how, at the very gates of the prison where she was doomed to linger, she saw the short squatty form of her hateful kinsman, who, advancing towards her as if to take a friendly and eternal leave, whispered into her ear some demoniac words taunting her for having once rejected him and fallen in love with a worthless adventurer.

Of all these details you are necessarily deprived. We do not see that they are material to the story, or if they are, we might as well dispose of them in ten lines instead of as many pages. We are not sketching a character but telling a story. The end is our aim, not the bulk. Besides, shall we confess it? we experience great difficulty in managing true incidents by the rules which govern fiction. If we had invented this narrative we might mould it as we chose, but truth is not so plastic. Our information in regard to the principal events we are engaged in relating was chiefly derived from Crockett. And his heedless, good-humored or ironical way of telling the most touching scenes made an impression upon our minds which renders us incapable of "working them up" (especially the love passages) in the true novel style.

Years had elapsed since the date of our story when we became acquainted with that remarkable young man. It was at Lima that we met him in the character of a Lieutenant. For he had acquired a fondness for that city,

which made him on all occasions solicit orders for the Pacific station. Our curiosity had become excited on the subject of Saint Clair's adventures in Peru, several passages of which we had heard related in conversation; and we chiefly sought the acquaintance of the young officer on account of the leading part which he was known to have enacted in some of the most striking of those adventures. We two soon became quite intimate. But he rather disliked to recur to the past. It needed the utmost exercise of our diplomacy to induce him, when in the best of temper, to disclose the memorable scenes he had witnessed; and then the prevailing mood of the moment so tinged his scanty revelations, that it required the greatest stretch of our analytical powers to string the disjointed fragments into a connected whole.

We will here insert as an instance one of our conversations with him on the subject. It took place on the quarter-deck when he was on duty. There were several points which we desired to clear up in those transactions of which we already had information. Therefore we plied the young Lieutenant with direct and leading questions.

"Pray," we remarked with the greatest simplicity, "how did you ever account for the success of your friend in getting you out of the robbers' hands?"

"I don't know," answered he, in an abstracted manner. "Boatswain," exclaimed he, "overhaul that boat's falls."

We modestly waited until the order was executed, and then we returned to the charge.

"Were you not puzzled to find out——"

"Quite so. Call away the second cutters."

Thus foiled in our cross-examination, we had nothing to do but to bide our time. We watched our chance however, and at the first opportunity tried him "on another tack."

"I am somewhat surprised," we ventured to remark, "that a gentleman like you, and an American Navy officer, should have continued on friendly terms with a man whom you had discovered to be the chief of a gang of robbers."

The young man's face colored, and he replied with warmth:

"Indeed he was no such thing. I suppose that it may look so to you from what I said the other night, but I'll tell you. You know that the Government here forbids the

exportation of the precious metals, or else lays duties on them which are tantamount to a prohibition. Well, such measures would annihilate commerce if there was no way of evading the law. The greatest houses in the place have been from time immemorial engaged in smuggling silver out of the country. Indeed, officers of high standing in our Navy sometimes lend their aid to such practices. I ought to know; I was captain's aid on board the——. The shipper is a rich man now. Saint Clair was deeply engaged in that business, and, I presume, had to hire the *montañeros* once in a while to help him. That gave him considerable influence among them."

"I presume," said we, delighted at the success of our ruse, "that the *montañeros* helped him some in that attack on the escort of Doña Paula?"

"I rather think they did. If it hadn't been for her silly scruples, Saint Clair's steamer was all ready to put to sea. We got her there, though, afterwards."

"Do tell me all about it."

Here he seemed to think that he had said enough for one sitting. So, looking about for some new pretext to break off the conversation, "Quarter-master!" cried he.

"Aye, aye, sir," cried the quarter-master.

"Quarter-master, what signal was that?"

"3. 1. 8., sir."

"Very good. Quarter-master!"

"Sir!"

"Make 2. 1. 9."

"Aye, aye, sir."

The affair of the signals disposed of, we began making new zig-zag approaches towards the busy officer; but whenever he perceived in us the slightest disposition to question him on our favorite topic, he suddenly discovered something about the ship to be overhauled or looked after. First he called up the gunner and asked him about some tompions; then he had a forecandleman sent to the mast and placed on the black list; next he had to hold a consultation with the boatswain concerning the standing rigging.

But we were as persevering as even himself; we let no opportunity escape to gratify our curiosity, until the weary officer, determined to foil us to the last, ordered eight bells struck and the watch called.

The relieving officer came on deck in very bad humor. No wonder; it lacked twenty

minutes of the time by our unfailing chronometer.

We fear that our indiscreet revelations are in a fair way to prejudice the reader against our naval friend. This we sincerely regret; for we love Crockett as if he had been our hero. Let the reader however take a six months' cruise on board of a man-of-war, and we think that he will feel inclined to make much allowance for sins which only involve temper on the part of Navy officers. Life on ship-board is an unnatural life. The constant contact of so many human beings crowded together within a small space is calculated to engender a fermentation, a continual irritability of disposition, against which the happiest understandings are seldom proof. Nowhere would "familiarity" so quickly "breed contempt," were it not that this artificial mode of life is propped up by the still more artificial stays of Discipline and Hierarchy. That rank thing, Rank, is like a chain passing from summit to base of the crazy edifice of Naval Discipline, and binding together the most heterogeneous elements. Each individual bears with the tyranny of his superiors, first because he must, and chiefly because he has others under himself upon whom he can vent his spleen. Thus the majestic First Luff, after his morning report to the skipper, comes out of "the presence" either radiant or morose, according as that gouty or dyspeptic chieftain has treated him well or ill—has passed a good or a bad night. Incontinently he proceeds to distribute the channels of grace or ire among the lesser reservoirs. From junior luff to middy, from middy to warrant officer, from boatswain to mates, it flows fore and aft, until the "third class boy" gets kicked under the forecastle by the last landsman on the muster roll.

Yet each class has its rights, and is tenacious of them to an extent which—considering the little consequence of the matters generally involved—is sometimes quite ludicrous. Midshipmen are particularly obnoxious on that score to their superiors. An old skipper was once remonstrating with one of these worthies upon the decay of the good old rules of the service. "When I was a midshipman," said he, "I had not the tenth part of your privileges." The youngster replied: "Oh! Captain, now-a-days midshipmen are *gentlemen*, you know."

And so they are—the most technical young gentlemen in the world—regular sea-lawyers—not sharks, but tenacious and punctilious to an incredible extent. Their address in provoking their superiors and yet shying clear of a court-martial is proverbial. Once a watch officer had to send a youngster below for some slight misdemeanor.

"Go below, sir," said he.

"Aye, aye, sir," answered the youth, touching his cap. With ready obedience he went down the hatch, and immediately reappeared on deck.

"Go below, sir," repeated the watch officer in a rage.

"Aye, aye, sir," replied the imperturbable midshipman, suiting the action to the word, but coming up again in an instant.

In short, he carried on the same manoeuvre of obeying the strict letter of the order several times, until the wrathful Lieutenant bethought himself of saying,

"Go below, sir, *and stay there.*"

With so many causes of irritation, is it astonishing that Navy officers are seldom distinguished for sweetness of temper?

We have tried it; try it you.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

TAKING THE VEIL.: IN THE CONVENT SANTA CHIARA AT NAPLES.

CORSO OF NAPLES
The Albion, A Journal of News, Politics and Literature (1822-1876); Dec 5, 1846; 5, 49;
American Periodicals
pg. 577

the same style, with the exception of the mirrors which dazzle one on all sides in the famous 'galerie des ambassadeurs.'

At the upper end of the aisle, rows of chairs were placed on each side, which, numerous as they were, were already half filled by the company which had forestalled us. Thanks, however, to the savoir faire of our illustrious pioneers, we obtained seats within a few rows of the altar, and that grand affair once satisfactorily accomplished, we had leisure to gaze around us.

I thought I had never seen the church look so splendid. The sunlight streamed through the lofty windows, gleaming upon the bright marbles, the chequered pavement, and the brilliant uniforms of the guardie del corpo, numbers of whom were scattered amidst the gay crowd that now began to throng the aisle, their sparkling silver facings and brilliant epaulettes strikingly contrasted by the dark habits and gloomy cowls of the nuns, who were dispersed in groups of twos and threes. Parties of ladies in the most elegant demi-toilettes, escorted like ourselves by the different cavaliers d'opere were hurrying in rapid succession up the centre, bowing, as they passed, to the Principessa Bisignano, who had stationed herself on the last line of seats, and rose every moment to receive the invitees; the strangers with a courteous salutation, her own friends with a few words of greeting. Soldiers—monks—peasants—and lazzari filled the remainder of the church; as usual, a motley assemblage, while in the midst of this strange melange, priests in their black robes, young aspirants in white surplices, were rushing in and out of the sagrestia, giving orders and superintending the preparations; and lay brothers were running up and down the steps of the altar, some unfolding their rich stoles and vestments destined for the Nuncio, others, laying out ewers and cups of massive and richly chased gold and silver on a table that stood on one side, covered with a white cloth, fringed with purple, all of them evidently as much excited by the importance of the occasion as if they had been making preparations for a baciamano,* or the apusalizio of one of the princesses. Two or three others, with their long poles and little tapers attached to the end of them, were mounted on the top of the altar, and even then were scarcely able to light the wax candles which rose behind it in pyramidal and fantastic forms. For in all the funzioni they are never lighted till the last moment, and as rapidly extinguished the instant the ceremony is concluded.

The altar itself was magnificently decorated, as is customary upon such occasions: a number of silver and gold busts of the saints, the greater part of the tesoro of the convent, were ranged along it in two rows, one above the other, while between each head stood alternately beautifully chased silver vases, filled with enormous pyramidal bouquets of fresh flowers, whose fragrance mingled with the scent of the frankincense which already rose powerfully from the two gold chased incensory which lay at the foot of the table.

High over head the long lines of lattices were filled with Nuns, whose white veils glimmered behind the gilt bars, as they peeped through the infirmary, like birds in an aviary, gazing on the animated scene below, and laughing and whispering to each other their observations on the toilets of the ladies, and probably the beaux yeux of the gentlemen; for, be it known to all the uninitiated, that Neapolitan ladies, not even excepting the monacelle, are famous, not only for having eyes, but for knowing how to use them to the very best advantage. Thus much at least we could discern, that they were laughing and whispering amongst themselves, though the bars were too close to enable us to distinguish their faces, in spite of the most persevering efforts on our part, and on that of others, and notwithstanding the assistance of lorgnons, jumelle, and every sort of lunette d'approche we had provided ourselves with. Lord W———, with a friend of his, the only Englishmen present, were equally unfortunate; in vain they tried every species of 'long range,' with which they had come armed, with a degree of national pertinacity which deserved a better reward; but the provoking lattices were impenetrable, and he only succeeded in scandalizing all the Italian ladies around, who, *oltre* the scandals, were quite at a loss to conceive what pleasure the bel Milordo Inglese could take in staring a whole congregation of nuns out of countenance, when there were so many much better worth looking at, and quite ready and willing to be stared at besides, in his immediate vicinity.

It was now a quarter to ten, but as yet there was no sign of the arrival of his eminence the Nunzio, or of the sposa, as in the Italian phraseology, the postulant or novice is always termed, according to the Machiavelian policy, which has made the ceremony of taking the veil a sort of ignis fatuus of a marriage, designed apparently to console the simplicity of the victim with the shadow, for the loss of the substance. But though the hour waned, we were not impatient, for groups of new comers continued to pour rapidly into the church, and we were well amused, as we turned from the dark eyes of the signore to pass our observations on the dashing guardie, or the supercilious looking diplomats, from the gold embroidery on their coats to the curl of their hair.

Nothing could be more brilliant than the whole colpo d'occhio or more elegant, more costly than the toilettes of the ladies. The most magnificent lace, the richest tissues,—the most valuable ornaments, met our eyes on all sides, till one might have fancied that wealth was as common in Naples as in London, and good taste a little more so. For though every thing that money and extravagance could purchase was there, there was nothing overloaded, nothing overdone; it was the triumph of the *ni trop peu*, which none but a foreign *élegante* understands to perfection. The dresses were all of the richest or the most diaphane materials,—the ornaments few, but handsome and precious—a diamond brooch, or *serenoniere*—a costly bracelet, or a solitary ring of price, were all. There were no dangling chains, no paltry trinkets, no supererogatory flounces or turbelows. None of the knots and streamers of coloured ribbons, or scraps and bands of black velvet, with which so many of our fair compatriots delight in decorating themselves, and which give them so much the appearance of the Lord Mayor's horse, decked out in all its holiday trappings. Everything in the toilets that surrounded us was simple, chaste, and distingué, and the coiffure, so graceful, so classic. The thick tresses of their dark hair, wound round and round upon the back of the head; the black braids parted upon the brow, so glossy, so smooth, so perfect, not a lock, not a hair out of place, no straggling ends, no stray curls wandering rebelliously over one eyebrow, and tucked off the opposite temple,—the heads around me looked as if cut out of antique *canons*. Some of the ladies wore lace or gauze capotes, but the greater number, like ourselves, wore black lace veils, that most becoming of all draperies, fastened on the back hair with gold and silver pins,—*spadini*—arrows, &c., and floating over the shoulders a l'Espagnole, or drawn over the little dress caps of the elder ladies, for no one above the rank of a peasant, in France or Italy, ever dreams of displaying the ravages of time pro bono publico, by letting herself be seen without a cap, once *passé la quarantaine*.

A loud rustling of silk, and a rush of two or three of the principal lions, who were lounging listlessly before us, lorgnon in hand, made me turn to see a slight delicate looking woman advance up the aisle, leaning upon the Prince of San Giacomo, and followed by a whole train of cavalieri. I recognised the Marchessa B———, of Florence,—the heroine of many a tale and many an adventure, celebrated for her taste, her elegance, her grace, her lavish prodigality, and several other things not sanctioned in the rubric.

On this occasion she gave no démenti to her fame. Nothing could be more costly, more exquisite, more finished, than her whole toilette: a dress of the richest black moire, covered with three valants of point de Bruxelles,

* A levee at court.

a foot deep, that stood out all round her, as if on a hoop; a cordeliere of perle fine encircling her small waist, and falling to her feet; a superb brooch of a single diamond—pearl bracelets, with diamond clasps—her light chestnut hair dressed as usual in Clotilde plats that encadré her face and traversed at the back with a splendid diamond arrow, which fastened on a black Brussels lace mantille, that floated down to the ground; she was the perfection of elegance.

'Deucedly well got up, by Jove!' audibly exclaimed the English peer as the Marchessa approached, sweeping the ground with her priceless lace in the inimitable style of a genuine lionne, with as much nonchalance as if it had been book muslin; while in one of her small, exquisitely ganteed hands, she held a crimson velvet missal, clasped with gold, and a pocket handkerchief, which, from the profusion of delicate embroidery with which it was covered, as well as the beauty of the garniture, might have cost perhaps eight hundred or a thousand francs—and in the other she wielded a long rocco fan, embroidered and chiselled a la Louis Quatorze. In her suite followed the Marchessa M———, a celebrated Neapolitan belle, all in blue moire, and looking almost as fascinating as her Florentine rival—sapphire-berilled *spadino* passed through the indispensable veil, and traversing the curled folds of her jet-black hair, that were rolled over and over as thick and lustrous as a serpent's coil. On one side of the Marchessa walked the Prince of Sant'Autime, covered with decorations—and on the other the Marchessa B———, wearing the star of the Tuscan order San Stefano. Two officers of cavalleria leggiera in their full dress uniform, and several other attaches, brought up the rear.

A stir and confusion at the entrance, a rolling of carriages, and the clash of muskets as the soldiers presented arms, gave notice of the arrival of the nunzio; a moment more and the prelate entered, accompanied by four or five priests, two of whom were his own private attendants and secretaries. Half way up the aisle, there was a crimson velvet prie Dieu; his attendants ran on before, and placed a crimson cushion on it,—here the nunzio stopped and prayed for a few minutes before the side altar, while the priests knelt behind him.

Then he resumed his progress to the altare maggiore, where he was led to a throne chair of crimson velvet, fringed with gold bullion; its high Gothic back, and massive arms, elaborately carved and moulded, and most richly gilt; and now the priests all gathered round him, and his toilette commenced. Never was there a more intricate affair of state. No French *petite maitresse*, surrounded by her *femmes de chambre*, and dressing for ball, ever gave them so much occupation. The priests gathered round him—one untied the strings of his robe a second pulled off the sleeves; two others on each side, lifted it skillfully over his head, and a fifth ran down the steps and carried off the rejected vestment to the sagrestia. Again and again the same process was repeated. First the robe disappeared, and that rich Tyrian purple silk, which, like the scarlet silk of the cardinals, is unique for colour and texture, and is manufactured nowhere but in Rome for the clergy; then a white sort of surplice bordered with an antique guipure of the finest quality, a foot broad, which would have driven any of the fair amateurs of lace mad, and might literally have been said to be worth its weight in gold;—then another robe, then a sort of scarf, then some other portion of his dress, till I really began to fear that, like the chrysalis, his eminence would have nothing left.

'Misericordia! will they undress him altogether?' I exclaimed in dismay to the Duca di R———, who had taken his seat beside us, as the fifth garment vanished into the sagrestia.

'Cospiù! non si spaventi così!' laughed the Duca. 'They might go on for the next half hour without coming to the extremity of his eminence's habiliments. But see, your fears are not likely to be realised, for the disrobing is already concluded.'

In effect, there was a dead stop, the clerical dames d'aours stood with folded arms, and his eminence sat in his great fauteuil, very much diminished in dignity and size, by being shorn of his glories of 'purple and gold,' though by no means uncomfortably diminished.

A moment more, and a train of priests issued from the sagrestia, each bearing some portion of the vestments which were to replace those of which the nunzio had been despoiled. First came the cope, then the amice, then the stole, all borne on a species of trays, and all of gold or silver tissue, stiff with the most massive gold embroidery; but the last was the most resplendent of all. A fifth bore a sort of scarf, I think it is called the scapulary; another followed with the magnificent silver gilt crozier, sparkling with precious stones, and so admirably and richly chased, that it looked as if it had just emerged from the studio of Bevenuto Cellini. The mitre came last, set all over with gems, the rainbow tinted rays of emeralds and diamonds, sapphire, ruby, and topaz, glittering in the sunlight—a perfect blaze.

The toilet was performed in the same manner as the disrobing: two of the padri passed the first garment over his eminence's head, while two more raised it up at the back, and a fifth drew it down in front—in the same manner, one after the other, different vestments were put on by the priests, turning and twisting them about—adjusting them round their patient's throat, or lifting up his arms, and slipping them through, just as if they had been dressing a mannequin; while the prelate, on his part, sat as immovable as if he had been in reality made of wood instead of carne ed ossa. In another instant the embroidered scarf was hung round his neck, while two priests placed the mitre on his head. A fourth put the crozier into his hand, and another knelt on the steps, and taking off the nunzio's *chausures*, replaced them by the white satin shoes, embroidered with rich Greek crosses in gold. The toilet was terminated at last.

It was the first time since his arrival from Paris, that Monsignor C——— had made his appearance in public, and as a nunzio condescends to officiate only on state occasions, all were anxious to obtain a good view of the new dignitary; but till the dressing was completed, and the squadron of priests who stood round him thinned, it was impossible to catch more than a transitory glimpse. But now that their functions were terminated, one by one, they knelt before him, kissed his hand, and then retired; and his eminence sat on his throne,—a gorgeous mass of silver tissue, gold, and gems.

Nothing could be more unlike his predecessor—fat, rubicund, smiling, and good humoured, he was the very antipodes of Monsignor di Pietro, who, with his acutely marked features, his piercing black eyes and slender figure, sat at a little distance, enacting the, to him, unusual part of a spectator, his departure for Lisbon having been delayed; a circumstance to which we owed the rare spectacle of two nuncios meeting in the same place.

There was a pause of inaction, and in a few minutes the muskets rang again upon the pavement,—the crowd at the lower end of the church pressed forward, and every one turned to look at the sposa who now entered, but of whom as yet we could only obtain a glimpse of floating white draperies and gold, preceded by a sort of *sagrestano*, with his high staff of office, who made way for her; and accompanied by only one lady. She too stopped before the prie Dieu at the side altar, and prayed for a few minutes, while her friend knelt beside her; in five minutes they rose, and passing close beside us, advanced to the foot of the altar, and seated themselves on two crimson velvet chairs placed for them within the enclosure.

The monaca was attired in a complete bridal dress. She wore a rich white satin, embroidered on tablier in gold, and circling all round on guirlande a blonde guimpe mounted up to her throat—it is not being considered correct for a nun to show anything but her face—a sparkling diamond necklace, with a superb *seigné* attached to it. A band of brilliants of the purest water glittered on the forehead; a white blonde mantille floated round

TAKING THE VEIL.

IN THE CONVENT SANTA CHIARA AT NAPLES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE CORSO OF NAPLES.

A monacazione is always a romantic and curious, often a mournful and interesting ceremony. Almost always worth seeing, because almost always presenting some new feature,—some new colouring, or picturesque peculiarity to the observer. Amongst the number I have witnessed, I have scarcely ever beheld two alike, for though of course the essential points of the funzione are the same everywhere, the minor details vary ad infinitum, according to the rank, the taste, the consideration, or wealth of the novice and the convent. The more noble, both of course the more grand the ceremony, and the more costly its accessories. We had not as yet seen one in Naples, and it was therefore with infinite pleasure that I opened a large official-looking envelope, while I inwardly showered effusions of thanks on Monsignor di Pietro, to whose kindness we were indebted for the invitation, as I glanced over its contents, in which we were 'pregato' by the Principessa di Bisignano to intervenire alla solenne vestizione dell'egregia donzella, signora donna Maria Angelica Barlinghieri, de' Marchesi di R——, who was to take the white veil in the most noble convent of Santa Chiara, at ten o'clock on the following Monday.

The name of Santa Chiara alone, the finest convent in Naples, into which none but ladies of the highest noblesse can ever be admitted, would have sufficed to intimate to us the rank of the postulant, and the importance of the ceremony, even without the addition of that of the Princess of Bisignano, the most aristocratic lady of the whole Neapolitan court; the exclusiveness of whose salon, like the Esterhazy soirees at Vienna, is the point culminant of the haute volée, the mere admission into the intimacy of which is of itself the *ne plus ultra* of distinction in Naples.

It is fortunate for the London world that Catholicity is not the order of the day in England; the early hours of the Catholic rites would hardly suit the late ones of English fashionable life. What would a West-end belle think of being compelled to rise at seven, in order to be dressed, sometimes en grande toilette, and in diamonds, by eight o'clock, and to be out at nine, as an Italian *élegante* is forced to do, *bongre malgre*, at least 150 mornings in the year, either to attend mass, or the thousand and one funzioni of her church.

On the morning of the monacazione—aware of the importance of being in time, to all those who wished either to see or hear—we had completed our toilette, and concluded our breakfast by half-past eight, and before nine we were driving down the Toledo.

Even at that early hour numbers of flaneurs were promenading up and down in it: loungers were seated in the cafes, and ladies were driving from shop to shop, though the more general hour for making purchases is from ten to twelve, when the Toledo and its adjoining streets are filled with carriages, stopping the way before every magazin, while on all sides throng groups of idlers and lookers on. But from six o'clock in the morning, half the Neapolitan world is on foot, as from that till twelve is the only cool period of the day, till seven o'clock in the evening.

As we rode down the Strada Maddaloni, we were surprised to find that a file of carriages had already anticipated us, and we were detained a quarter of an hour before the Gesu Nuovo, ere we entered the portal of Santa Chiara. We were not at all too early. Handsome carriages, groups of footmen in their white liveries, glittering with gold and silver lace, and dashing chassieurs, with their waving plumes, filled the court; the pavement and steps of which were all strewn over as usual, with branches of fresh myrtle and box. The soldiers were already stationed at the entrance of the church.

As we alighted, three or four gentlemen came forward out of a circle of cavalieri deputed to receive the ladies, and led us in. I took the arm of the Principino di Bisignano, who wore a rich uniform, and was covered with orders; the rest of our escort were in full evening costume, white cravats rich stars and ribbons, &c.

The church of Santa Chiara is one of the richest and finest in Naples though its architecture is peculiar, nay, almost unique, in Italy. To eyes accustomed to the columned aisles, the picturesque lights, and mysterious shadows of the innumerable side chapels that are generally the indispensable accessories of Catholic churches, especially Italian ones, Santa Chiara—with its richly frescoed roof, and massive rococo gilding, its glittering walls, one unbroken mass of precious marbles, varied only by the long range of gilt lattices high above, that extend the whole length of the one grand aisle—looks more like a gigantic *salle de bal* of the epoch of Louis Quatorze, than a church. I could almost have imagined myself transported to Versailles, and gazing through a magnifying glass on the magnificent *salle* where Marie Antoinette used to receive her court; it was so much in

adorned on her hair by a bouquet of diamond épis on one side, and a magnificent aigrette on the other.

Nothing could be more brilliant than the dress and diamonds; yet I was disappointed; the Duca had told me her story—one of those drames d'intérieur peculiar to Italy—uneventful and short, yet passionate, visionary, and devoted,—and I had expected to see a heroine, but nothing could be less like a vision of romance than the little, fat, good humoured looking rosy brunette who sat before me, bowed down by the ponderous weight of diamonds she was condemned to bear for once.

Donna Maria Berlinghieri was the daughter of a noble house,—a rich heiress, an only child, with a large dower. Her parents had done all that they could to prevent her entering the convent, and a reluctant consent had been wrung from them at last, only by her irrevocable resolution to take the veil, and the impossibility of preventing it.

There are three primary causes in Italy, to one or other of which, at most, all the religious vocations may be traced. The liking of habit, general amidst dull and timid minds, for the monotonous but tranquil seclusion; the unchanging and uneventful routine of conventual life which, whether an Italian girl has been educated in a convent or at home, is the existence she has been used to, from her infancy.—Second y, a passion malheureuse—or last, not least, misfortune, and its followers, disgust and misanthropy. The vocation of the first class may pursue the even tenor of its way to the end of the chapter, rejoicing in the pleasures of illuminating missals, decking out altars, or embroidering silks; but the two latter either plunge into fanaticism and bigotry, or rise into a frantic enthusiasm, with its accompanying trances, ecstasies, etc. For the heart that has loved well once, will glow again, especially in Italy; and when the earth has crumbled into dust, the heavenly idoll fills its shrine.

Speculating on these thoughts, I had pictured to myself if not a beauty, at least a pale, interesting looking girl, such as I had sometimes seen on similar occasions; or, perhaps, one of those dark Juno-like Roman women, with the Greek profile and the Sybilline eyes, her whole countenance stamped with solemn indifference or disdain for that world which she was going to renounce for ever. But nothing could be more unlike the picture than the reality. A single glance at the monaca dispelled my dream at once. There was no soul, no fire, in those dull dark eyes—no intellect in the low brow—no grace, no poetry, in the thick lips, the little round face, and the still rounder figure. She was just the sort of being who, in England, would have been nursing children, mending stockings, and scolding servants,—in Germany knitting, or making puddings,—and in Italy was destined to dress wax dolls—go to matins and complines, and seccare her confessor.

One felt no pity for her fate. Nature had evidently not intended her for anything better. How different from the pretty brilliant Contessina Bolognetti, or the more nobly beautiful Mademoiselle della Porta, only a few years ago the two most admired belles of Rome,—both of them daughters of patrician houses, whose names rank among the most ancient of the 'libro d'oro,'—both young—both beautiful; and now both nuns in the noble convent of the Tor da' Specchi. The first in consequence of an unhappy home and a degout au monde; the second, from some mysterious motive, which none have ever been able to fathom, and which of course, in default of evidence, has been attributed to a 'passione infelice,' for some unknown vogueggiro, who has had the art to preserve his name unknown, even after the whole Roman world, cardinals and monsignors included, had puzzled themselves for three months in vain to discover what unimaginable person or cause could have induced a beauty and an heiress, after having, on dit, refused Prince Massimo, whom her sister, Donna Giacinta della Porta, has since married,—to prefer the seclusion of a convent to the homage of all the handsomest cavalieri in Rome, and to all the pleasures of living in the world.

But comparisons are odious; as my thoughts reverted to them, it was melancholy to reflect that beings so formed to embellish and grace life should bury themselves alive, when there are such millions, who, like the interesting girl that I gazed upon, seem fit for nothing else.

The lady who accompanied the monaca wore a lilac brochee silk, covered with blonde—decolletée—short sleeves and loaded with diamonds, for it is the pride on these occasions to make a grand display of jewels. All the family diamonds are heaped on the postulant, and in Italy there is a greater profusion of them than in any other part of the world; for in all the great families the diamonds are heir-looms, that cannot be disposed of under any circumstances,—thus there is scarcely an ancient noble family in Italy, be they ever so ruined, that does not possess the superb diamonds that have been handed down to them from father to son ever since the palmy days of Italian splendour; and on grand occasions, such as the reception of a cardinal, for instance, when it is customary to show them all, the spectacle is beyond measure dazzling and magnificent.

In the present instance the young novice was actually drooping beneath the pile of diamonds which was heaped upon her. In general, all the relations and friends of the nun surround her, and seats are placed for them within the balustrade that encloses the altar; but on this occasion, as it was against their consent, none of them were present.

In a few minutes, a seat was placed for the nunzio, in front of the altar,—the sposa was led up,—prayed a moment at a prie Dieu, and then ascending the steps, kissed the nunzio's hand, and knelt before him. He spoke to her in a low voice, asked her questions, which she answered in the same one; and which we understood to be, respecting the sincerity of the vocation—its voluntariness—her knowledge of the solemn engagements she was about to take; in short, all the usual catechism in such cases.

During this time her friend stood a few paces away from her, in the background. This over, the postulant knelt again before the prie Dieu, and then both seated themselves opposite to the altar. After the other short ceremonies usual, a monk issued from the sagrestia, and taking his seat at the top of the steps, began the predica.

I was disappointed at first, for I had expected the nunzio to have preached, as I had seen the cardinal who officiated at the vestizione of Mademoiselle Bolognetti; but we had no loss,—meno l'onore,—for the monk was one of the most eloquent and celebrated predicatori of Naples, and on this occasion he did not fall short of his fame.

The subject was one well calculated for the display of his flowery and impassioned style, and he made the most of it. Nothing could be more singular than the predica,—or rather it was not a predica, but the most glowing of epithalamiums. He described the bliss which awaited la sposa beata, the supreme happiness of the divine communion, with all the brilliant luxuriance of oriental metaphor. His language, too, was of the elevated tone and style of the poets, as is always the case in prediche addressed to the higher orders in Italy. His poetic diction increased the illusion, and as he spoke of the midnight visits of the divine spouse, dwelt on the ineffable delights of his bacio d'amore and the Tulame inforato, and, as if carried away by the irresistible impulse of his feelings, rushed on in a strain of fiery colouring, all poetry and passion, but much better adapted to Italian than English. I thought of Torquato reciting to the beautiful Eleonora d'Este that exquisite canto of the 'Gerusalemme':—

'Tondo e il ricco edificio, o nel piu chiuso
Grembo di lui ch'è quasi centro al giro,
Un giardino v'ha, ch'adorno e sovra l'uso
Di quanti piu famosi unqua fioriro;—

and all that follows. Tasso's description of the enchanted garden, the Nais and their sports, and last, not least, the scenes between Rinaldo and Armida, were scarcely more exaltées.

'Cogliam d'amor la rosa, amiamo or quando
Esser si puote, riamato amando;—

should have been the text. Yet, unsuitable as it seemed to the place and the occasion, as a specimen of eloquence, the predica was unrivalled,—poetic, brilliant, eloquent in language, and fertile in imagery. It was well worth coming to hear, even had there been no other inducement. It lasted half an hour, during which the sposa, to whom it was all addressed, kept her head bent down, and never raised her eyes.

At the conclusion she was again led up to the altar, where she knelt on the steps at the nunzio's feet. Two or three priests drew round, one carried a small silver salver, on which lay scissors with which the nunzio took and cut off the first lock of hair, another presented the crown, all glittering with tinsel and little coarse artificial flowers. Monsignor C—— placed it on her head, and then both rose and descended the steps, the monaca holding the end of her scapulary, evidently trying with difficulty to keep her crown on her head, while she walked with her eyes cast down, and the whole train preceded by the officer with the staff, accompanied by the priests, traversed the aisle, and went out of the grand portal.

The entire of that part of the ceremony which takes place in the church was terminated, and all the rest was to be within the precincts of the convent. Numbers of the inexperienced followed the procession, to see the nun received at the convent gate by the whole sisterhood, but we, with all the cognoscents, remained, in order to secure a good place at the grating. We were spared, however, the unpleasantness of the general rush, for Signor D——, of the nunziato, had given us in especial charge to one of the friars, who unlocked the door, and passed us in before any one else was allowed to enter.

The inferrata was situated immediately behind the grand altar. It was of an unusual size, much larger and loftier than an ordinary window, and the bars were very wide apart. On each side were two projecting buttresses of marble, which served us for seats. Thanks to this we could see

the interior of the convent as well as if we had been inside; a rare piece of good fortune, for in general the inferrate are so small, the bars so close, and the crowd so great, that it is scarcely possible to distinguish more than the shadow of a passing veil, or the flame of a taper.

The hall into which we gazed, for it was too grandiose to be called a room, looked very like the Sala Regia of the Vatican. After such a comparison it is almost unnecessary to add that it was very magnificent. Frescoed from floor to roof, the ceiling was one mass of superb paintings, which were brightly visible by the light of several very high windows, opening, no doubt, on the cloisters and gardens; the contrast to the comparatively gloomy tribuna of the church, the tombs of the kings and queens of Naples frowning on each side, with their quaint old sculpture, their recumbent statues, and massive marble canopies, was striking in the extreme.

But the iron cancelli were thrown open, and the company poured into the enclosure, which was instantly filled to overflowing.

Then it was, that we felt grateful to our conductor, for every one, anxious to see, pressed forward, and foremost came the English group, forcing their way through, till they actually got in front of all who were less robust, and less pushing than themselves. Had we not been already seated, we should certainly have been driven out like the rest, for their argumentum ad hominem, if not persuasive, was perfectly irresistible.

One by one the nuns began to glide into the hall, and glance through at the assemblage. The older ones came courageously forward, stared at us through the gratings, examined our costume from head to foot, with all the instinctive curiosity of Eve, and made their remarks sotto voce to each other in the dialetto, with a naivete which amused me excessively. For though I sat next the grate, as a foreigner, they presumed I did not understand them.

One after another the ladies who stood ranged behind me were passed in review, and dismissed with alternate exclamations of 'O com'è bella,' or 'Gesù, Gesù, che brutta faccia!'

'Santa Vergine che belle donnina!' said one, pointing out the little French Contesse.

'O com'è carina! come è gentile,' chorussed the rest.

'E che caro piccerillo! Maria santissima! che angiolillo!' cried another, gazing in raptures on the child whom the Contesse held by the hand, dressed out like a fantoccino, as one often sees little boys in France, according to the taste of the mamma, in a velvet plaid skirt, a black velvet jacket, a crimson scarf bound round his waist, while his fair hair fell in long ringlets over his shoulders, after the fashion of a petit Saint Jean. Whether this costume was intended to represent a 'vieux clan,' as Alphonse Karr somewhat originally denominates a Scottish chieftain in one of his novels, or an Albanian Kelt, or a Calabrese brigand, I was at a loss to guess, although the gray beaver hat, with its pointed crown and cock's feathers, which he held in his hand, seemed to infer the latter.

'O che bel giovinetto! che occhi! che carnagione!
Madonna mia! che caro giovine!'

I turned to gaze in the direction of their glances. It was the really striking handsome countenance of Lord W——, towering literally a head and shoulders over every one else, which had elicited those expressions of admiration from two younger nuns, who were peeping timidly out of the background.

'Santo Vergine, questi beneditti Inglesi sono angioioli veri. What a pity they are not Christians!' continued the delighted sister.

'Zitta! zitta, Checchina per carità!' replied the other more prudently; while his lordship rather ungratefully exclaimed to his companion, 'All antiques, by Jove.' What a set of mummies, one would think they had all been excavated from Herculaneum!

As if expressly to give a *dementi* to the 'exquisite's' words, at that moment a young nun glided into the sala, and stood within a few feet of us. She was one of the prettiest girls I have ever seen, and to look pretty in a nun's dress, one must be exquisitely beautiful indeed, for of all costumes it is the most unbecoming; it will metamorphose a beauty into a very ordinary person, and a good-looking face into a perfect fright. Nor was that of the sisterhood of Santa Chiara any exception to the rule.

A coarse dress of black serge, scarcely taken in at the waist by a black girdle, through which was passed a narrow stripe of black cloth, (I forget its name,) which descended from the top to the bottom of the dress, a band of white linen covering the forehead, while another encircled the contour of the face, and was drawn in tight under the chin, covering the throat, and falling in a sort of festooned drapery down to the bosom of the robe; while a white veil of crimped lawn, flowing down to the waist at the back, and a clumsy rosary, with a rude crucifix suspended to it, hanging from the girdle, completed a toilet the most unfavourable to beauty, that ever has been invented.

Of the fair girl we gazed on, not an atom was visible except the delicate oval of her face, her feet were hidden by the long narrow skirt, her hands completely concealed by the loose, shapeless sleeves that fell over them, while not a single lock of hair was suffered to escape from the odious white bandages which swathed her head and throat, in pure imitation of a mummy; and yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, she looked lovely, although her beauty was not of an Italian cast, neither was it English, for there is always an expression in the countenance of a foreign blonde which renders her unlike an English one, be the resemblance ever so powerful.

Her features were small, delicate, and perfect, her eyes of the purest, he most cerulean blue; and the most brilliant carnation of England could not have surpassed the pure white and red of her cheeks. She appeared about eighteen or nineteen, but was probably several years older, for the unchequered monotony of a monastic life gives such a tone of *maivete* and simplicity to the mind, that the nuns almost always look younger than they really are, and are generally mere grown up children. Their ignorance of the world, and of everything beyond the precincts of their convent, is inconceivable, and the least thing astonishes and amuses them. In Naples, as elsewhere, they are famed for never having two ideas, their ignorance and simplicity are proverbial, and the term 'Testa di Monacella,' is synonymous with that of—fool.

Such is the effect of utter seclusion from society, to unstring and unhinge almost all the faculties of the brain and the soul.

While I compassionated the young nun, there was a stir amidst the crowd in the rear, and two or three priests, forcing their way through the throng, ashered in the nunzio, who seated himself in the great fauteuil that was placed for him immediately in front of the inferrata, while the priests gathered round him as usual, each striving to be more servicable, and more empressé than his companions. Two of them lifted the skirt of his stole over the back of the chair, a third ran in with a crimson cushion, and kneeling down arranged it beneath Monsignor C——'s feet, another stuffed one in at his back; if it had been the pope, they could hardly have made more of him; one would have thought that his eminence was taking up his domicile in that precious arm chair for the rest of his days.

And now the nuns began to crowd into the sala, many gathering round the grating, others hurrying to and fro, making preparations for the rest of the ceremony, while the Abbess, an infirm woman of eighty, came tottering in, and was supported by two of the sisters to a fauteuil placed beside the inferrata, where she seated herself; after having saluted the nunzio, who leaned forward and addressed her with 'Reverendissima madre, come stu di salute?'

'Eh non ce male, grazia a Dio!' responded the Madre Badessa, in a cracked, tremulous voice, her head shaking, and slipping the beads of her rosary mechanically through her fingers.

As they exchanged compliments, several nuns entered with various things belonging to the monaca, who was rather slow in making her appearance,—a delay which did not seem to please the nunzio any more than us; for he was evidently uneasy and impatient. Rather a fresh breeze blew through the grating. We found it very agreeable; but his eminence, with the usual national dread of draughts and raffreddate, evidently thought it would be his death; and I could overhear all his whispered complaints and lamentations to his attendants, some of them very uncanonical too.

'Che diavolo di vento!—Da dove viene?—Where does it come from?' Sara la morte mia! Io von ci resisto!—I cannot understand it.—Per Bacco! mi attraversa le midolla!—It goes through the marrow of my bones!—How slow they are!—Benedetta la monaca! will she never come!'—and a hundred other exclamations of the same kind.

His entourage was all in dismay. The priests whispered amongst themselves, and then supplicated the nuns to shut all the windows, to close all the doors, to exclude every breath of fresh air; the nuns whispered to each other, and seemed all in consternation. But it was labour in vain; still the wind blew, and still Monsignor C—— groaned, and lamented himself like a man on the rack. At last his fears got the better of his politeness, and he implored the reverendissima madre to have the veto molesto excluded if she did not wish to have his death to answer for.

'Stia sicuro, stia sicuro! em'uenza!' replied the badessa, hobbling out of the room much more rapidly than she had entered it.

Great was the confusion inside; there was a noise of shutting doors, closing shutters, and letting down blinds; but it was comme si l'on chantait—the wind was not to be baffled.

'Che razza di diavoleria! tatela affrettare!—make her hurry herself. I won't stay any longer,' muttered his eminence in despair.

The nuns seemed half driven out of their wits. Some rushed out, carrying away the different portions of the dress which were to have been put

on the novice before the gate, as is customary; while two of the priests, inspired with a bright idea, held up one of the vestments before the nunzio's face, another carried on a negotiation with some of the novices through the inferrata. Never was there such hurrying to and fro, such agitation; the whole community was sotto sopra. At last one of the nuns came forward with clasped hands, and the most deprecativo look imaginable, and exclaimed.

'Monsignore! sia persuaso, e tutto ermeticamente serrato, everything is shut.

'Ah! per Bacco! non cisto, sono tutto sudato. Mi piglio un malanno! Mi piglio la morte! I shall catch my death!' exclaimed the patient, rising in desperation. 'I shall go and wait in the parlatorio till she is ready.' And Monsignor C—— scrambled out of the crowd, followed by his whole train.

At length the monaca returned, and the ceremony proceeded. The monaca knelt behind the inferrata, to which Monsignor C—— drew close. She spoke in such a low indistinct murmur, that I could not catch the words. I should have supposed that she was repeating the vows, had I not known that they are never pronounced—at least the solemn ones,—till the professions. The nunzio read prayers, to which she responded; but all was as hurried and as rapid as possible.

The monaca had already exchanged her bridal dress for the dark habit of the order; but as yet the luxuriant tresses of her hair were uncut and uncovered.

At the conclusion of the prayers she was led back to a prie Dieu, on which she knelt, while a nun stood on each side. One held the veil and the linen head-dress, while the other cut off her hair close to the head. This always struck me as the most painful part of the ceremony; and even the young novice, indifferent and unconcerned as she had till then appeared, turned ghastly pale as the long locks fell around her on the ground. Next the band which covers the forehead was fastened round the head; then the drapery which encircles the face and throat was bound under the chin, and pinned on the crown of the head, then something else,—then the veil; and, last of all, the tinsel crown was artistically poised on the top of all, and fastened on with long pins by the attendant nuns. In an instant more the ceremony was ended, a lighted taper was placed in the novice's hand, and she was led into the interior of the convent, the whole train of nuns following in procession as before.

The religious *funzione* was over; but the best, at least the most amusing, part to the more *blase* portion of the spectators was still to come. The crowd poured out of the cancelli; and we, accompanied by the Duca di R—— and Prince S——, followed the stream out of the church, leaving the nunzio busily employed in discarding his borrowed plumes. Traversing the court, we entered an oblong room, where half the company were already assembled. Here none but the especially invited were admitted. At one end it opened on the vestibule, and at the other into the convent. It was not the parlatorio, as I had expected; for, instead of the usual inferrate, the folding doors of the convent were thrown open, and a long table placed across the threshold was the only barrier that separated us from the nuns, whom we now saw to great advantage; for they all crowded round the door, and looked out on us with quite as much interest and curiosity as that with which we gazed on them.

The table was laid out with piles of cakes on silver salvers, sweetmeats, preserves, bonbons, and all the endless variety of confections, for the lubrication of which the nuns in Italy are always so famed. On one side sat the nunzio, who had resumed his own costume of violet silk, his *calotte* on his head, and a gold chain with its handsome plain gold cross suspended from his neck. All those good things had been prepared for his especial consumption; while opposite to him was placed the novice, on the inside of that fatal threshold which she was never again to cross, her crown on her head, and her rosary in his hand. She looked very much flushed and excited, talked with much more animation than I had supposed her capable of, and laughed long and repeatedly at the nunzio's jests, who conversed with her in a good-humoured, rather jocular style, while he alternately either sipped an ice or swallowed a *bonbon*.

Beyond her sat the abbess and the under prioress, while one half of the nuns were rushing backwards and forwards superintending the arrangement of the ices and cakes, or hurrying on the *suore converse* who carried the trays, and handed them across the table to the domestics, who in their turn dispensed them amidst the company. The rest of the nuns, who were not actively employed, came forward to gaze at us, one after the other, so that we saw the entire community by turns, and amongst them we had again the pleasure of contemplating the beautiful young nun I had so much admired. She and one other were the only two of the sisterhood who could lay any claim to beauty. The others had all that pale, faded, care-worn look, and the singularly melancholy, listless expression, peculiar to almost all the nuns I have ever seen. But for the moment they were a little more animated; for a *monacazione* is one of the few gala scenes which break in upon their sepulchred existence from time to time, to revive them for a moment, and renew their intercourse with life.

This was a complete morning *soirée*, in which all was done on the most liberal and handsome scale, nothing could be more *recherche*, or more profuse, than the refreshments that were handed round every instant; ices, jellies, creams, cakes, bonbons, every imaginable species of sweetmeats was there, in a style that would have shamed many a ball room. To my astonishment, there was even punch *à la Romaine*, a fact which went far to prove to me that the nuns were much less ignorant of the ways of the world than I had imagined.

The reunion was now all vivacity and animation, the society had amalgamated, the ladies apparently determined to make up for the silence of the preceding two hours, laughed, and sipped ices, and chattered with inimitable rapidity: the *cavalieri* on their part were all gallantry and attention, while two or three went round the circle, presenting every one with a little *brochure* of complimentary verses addressed to the nun, which had been as usual composed and printed for the occasion; I glanced over them, and saw that they were in the same strain as the *predica*, a recapitulation of the Epithalium, in rhyme. Suddenly the usual cannonade of *pelards* was fired off, before the convent gates, stunning us, like a park of artillery, filling the whole room with smoke, and silencing every one, and everything, for the moment; but it was only for a moment, for no sooner was it over when the noise of tongues and glasses began again. It was nearly one o'clock, and no one seemed disposed to move till the nunzio's equipage drove up to the steps, when he rose, and as the sposa stooped to kiss his hand, he presented her with a beautiful silver crucifix which he requested her to keep as a *memoria*, and then he bid adieu to the abbess, and the rest.

Monsignor C——'s departure was the signal for the general departure. The Principessa di Bisignano came next, paid her compliments to the nun, and gave her the parting embrace. All the company followed in succession. I too went up like the rest, and paid my *devoirs* to the sposa elect, beginning with the indispensable '*mi rallegro*.' One by one the different equipages were announced, and the company retired, till we in turn entered our carriage and drove off; and nothing remained to us of the novel and interesting spectacle we had just witnessed, except its ineffaceable remembrance.

LEONI

LIFE IN NUNNERIES.

Rev. Dr. Keatinge, himself formerly a Catholic ecclesiastic, has furnished the *Christian Union* a long paper concerning nuns and nunneries, giving facts of which he has personal knowledge. As an inside and reliable view they are very valuable. We condense these paragraphs from Dr. Keatinge's article:

The philosophy of conventual life is very little understood. Now and then, we hear of a young and beautiful woman abandoning the world, and it shocks all our preconceptions about the matter. For the general idea is, that a woman to become a nun must be either violently crossed in love, or crazed with care, or a soured old maid disgusted with the unreality and hollowness of life. Let us be candid and admit, that, although each and all these causes conduce to the conventual life, there is yet another and higher than all. In this age of materialism and skepticism, there are, nevertheless, millions who esteem devotion to God and complete obedience to his divine behests the true science of living; and among these are some whose anxieties in this direction are special. Salvation is not an easy matter. If it requires the unremitting application of a life to excel in any worldly science or business, how much more consecration of the entire self is necessary to acquire the science of the saints! These are some of the motives which have been admitted to me. And, more than this, some renounce the world from ardent love to God. Let good Christians who read this and think they have more light acknowledge that the soul in which there is implanted a high appreciation of the love of Jesus, and a burning desire to do all for His sake, and to show an answering passion, is decidedly of a heavenly order. So the loving disciple St. John, less eloquent than St. Paul, less zealous than St. Peter, stands pre-eminent in gospel story. The nun who, like St. Theresa, feels this sentiment,

"O Love, I give myself to Thee,
Thine ever, only Thine to be,"
whatever alloy mingles with her devotion, must command the esteem of all who are not absolutely unbelievers in the possibility of human goodness.

The total crushing-out of all natural instincts is the first principle of conventual life. If they are virtuous and innocent—say a love of music, flowers, and children—their immolation is an act of self-denial. If they are capable of perversion, "since noblest things find vilest using," it is a duty. All humanity is self-willed because proud and conceited. It is the hardest possible thing to obey—yes, even to obey where love dictates the command—else why do we ever disobey God? To renounce the will is, therefore, the second principle of conventual life. The Superior is the one will of the convent. Her commands are as sacred as God's. Covetousness is ingrained in every heart; and to those who mortify this tendency there is a higher form of it, which we dignify with a better name, but which St. Paul calls covetousness. "Covet earnestly the best gifts." A man covets the esteem of pure and good men, the love of wife and children, etc.—all which are consistent with true piety. These the nun must renounce.

A mother's love is a sweet strain of music underlying the harsh discords of life, the one green spot in a life of sin which the hot breath of temptation has not withered. But the nun who is true to the conventual rule must renounce it. If there are fair and beautiful things, angel footprints on the world, that suggest home and endearing memories—a book, a strain of music, certain flowers, a picture, a poem may do this—she must eradicate them from her soul. Eyes framed to make a summer of joy by the light of their own loveliness must learn the coarse details of household drudgery. Natures instinctively delicate and shrinking must grow familiar with the horrible and loathsome. Life, that in the glow of youthful hope looked fair as a summer landscape, must be loathed and hated as the existence of a prisoner. The one hope supplanting every other, a lone star in a night of cheerless desolation, is the hope of heaven.

The misery of present existence robs death of terror, or the glory of anticipated heaven swallows up the shadow of the tomb. Let no one think this is in the least imaginary or exaggerated. It is far below the reality, and only attempts slight analysis of this psychological anomaly. It will suffice to convey the estimate of a nun formed by one who has heard her confessions. For let me take this opportunity of saying that, while on Biblical, philosophical, and experimental grounds I wholly dissent from the monastic ideal, there is little, if any, ground for

the catchpenny "revelations" of scandals which attract the public. These are, among women, rare exceptions, and even this is surprising if we think of the power vested in the Superior. The authority of a head of a religious house is, like episcopal authority, based on the decisions of councils and approved by the Pope. At one time it was absolute, and an abbess might put a nun to death. The power of death has never been taken from a Superior by enactment, but society has rendered it dangerous to indulge it. It is resorted to by other means, as in the recent case of the Polish nun. A Superior can flog a nun even to drawing blood; she can confine her on bread and water; she can keep her without clothing; she can torture her mildly by compelling her to swallow nauseous substances, putting reptiles and vermin in her room, forcing her to wear hair garments of rough and prickly texture, branding her with hot irons, and compelling her to make the sign of the cross on a filthy floor with her tongue till it is traced in blood. These and many other such powers are vested in the Superiors of convents in Rome, where there is no appeal. They are more or less employed to coerce young and ardent spirits. In Rome, the youngest daughter of every noble house is compelled to become a nun. Her father or brother cannot give a dowry sufficient for her to wed a person of her own station. But this dowry entitles her, small as it is, to a place in a convent. Generally, being forced into repugnant vows she evades them all she can. Her rank preserves her from gross outrage, but her spirit is broken by a process no less sure. She is made the scavenger of the household. The sisters are encouraged to heap indignities upon her by way of breaking her will. At chapter they tell all they can to her disparagement while she kneels in the middle of the room and receives penance. She wears the oldest clothes and goes bare footed. If visitors call she is said to be in retreat, and is not allowed to see them. All sorts of loathsome wounds are reserved for her to dress. She is denied all sorts of recreation, and if there is anything she particularly dislikes, she is compelled to eat or do it. It ends in making her spiritless. At first she is rebellious, but starvation tames her. Want of sleep is also a great reducer of mental vigor. I have seen a nun like this fall asleep in the confessional from absolute prostration. In every convent there is the bully of the Superior, generally a lay sister promoted over the choir sisters, and a person of coarse and vulgar mind. She has her spies who fear her. General distrust is the feeling aimed at. No one nun trusts another, and love is unknown. Even the affection which two women perfectly unrelated will sometimes cultivate in the world is here unknown. Too much kindness and civility of one nun to another is held to be suspicious.

In the year 1867 we were present at the reception of a daughter of an ancient Roman house destined, whether by choice or parental determination, to the little known order of nuns, commonly called in Rome, *The Buried Alive*. Of course this does not mean physical interment. Let us explain what it does mean. The building occupied by these ladies is "a strict enclosure." That bare-footed Clares is also such, but not in this sense. A strict enclosure means that the nuns do not go out into the world, but are not denied all intercourse with it. It is a walled building, partly antique, partly modern. Its interior I only know from the description of the Confessor of the Order. It has a small garden wherein grow the vegetables that serve for food to the sisters. A well supplies their only drink—water. The convent is divided into two compartments; the first is for the dying, who correspond to the novices of other orders, except that, whether they are satisfied or otherwise, they cannot depart. They are here initiated into the severity of living and austerity of penance, whose full acquirement fits them for the second compartments, the dead. Once with the portal over which is inscribed, "*We are buried with Christ*," there is no past nor future for the nun this side of the grave, but that which lies within the walls. Her habit is black, the light of day is excluded and, if true to her vocation, she hastens to die by penances that abridge life as surely as poisons. She ceases to belong to the world as much as if her requiem had been really said and not in semblance. Family and friends see her face no more, nor know when her last breath goes forth or her remains are buried. The priest who hears her confession does not see her. She receives the eucharist through a small hole large enough for a mouth. The bishop who was my informant told me that the nuns generally die without extreme unction, as no priest could administer it. They never speak to each other except through the Superior. They dig their own graves and fill them up each thirty-first of December, placing in them a record of something to which they have learned to die that year. They scourge themselves, fast whole days together, habitually eating but one meal daily of vegetables, without salt or other condiment, dry bread and water. They lie on beds of ashes and never disrobe. For the very few dealings they have with the world, a solitary lay sister is kept who conducts business in this way. A circular wheel is fixed in the convent wall, divided into two halves. It works on a pivot. A person outside the wall wishing to convey a parcel or message to the inside, rings a bell, and, placing it in the half of the wheel outside, waits for his answer. On hearing the bell the lay sister turns the wheel (it cannot move without her), and the outside comes inside. The answer is then placed in it, and the wheel turned again, so that without seeing or hearing anyone, communication may take place. The sisters never see this lay sister, who lives outside their enclosure in a cell near her wheel, to which, like Ixion, she seems chained. When death comes in reality, the sister is taken to the chapel and laid upon her bier. The office for the dead is then chanted, and while the awful *De profundis* breaks on her ear, she dies! In her habit as she lived they bury her, regretting her happiness in going hence. It is probable they do not live more than ten years, but as it requires a special dispensation from the Pope to penetrate inside the wall to the Superior, no one knows exactly.

The nuns of the Sacred Heart and Ursulines are generally devoted to education. Their system begins by gaining a thorough mastery over the girl. This is done by a species of mock confession in which the Superior of the house does all but give absolution. The complete knowledge of the girl's heart, its passions, tendencies, etc., is the foundation of authority. She is valued by her religious behavior, and becomes a favorite in proportion to her ability to tell tales. In all these schools the Superior's favorites are shunned. The education imparted is purely ornamental. The sciences, even such common ones as grammar and geography, are frequently only taught in the rudiments. The priests set the example of complete ignorance of general learning. "Have you a writer named Shakespeare?" was a question asked me by a great theologian more than seventy years of age. One very peculiar element of these schools is the attempt of the nuns to make the girls like themselves. A nun must cultivate a proper horror of the other sex. She must never look one in the face, never allude to one (priests excepted) in conversation, never by any chance speak to one alone. In talking even to a physician the requisite distance of three yards must be kept between them. This may all be very well for ladies vowed to celibacy, but it is unreasonable to inductinate girls who are destined to be married with such views. Consequently they become demure little hypocrites.

The ceremony of degrading a nun is singular. She is taken to the chapel and kneels before the altar. Here

a list of her misdeeds are read over to her, and she is asked whether in her opinion she considers herself deserving of degradation. Then the bishop solemnly absolves her from her vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, for which purpose he receives special dispensations from Rome. In token of this he takes the ring off the marriage finger, placed there at profession in token of the union of the nun with Christ as his spiritual bride. Sometimes the nun is really desirous of remaining, and tries hard to keep the ring, believing with fond superstition that if she can but keep it, she will still be a nun. On one such occasion, the nun in question positively fought and struck the priests and bishops, until one very gentle shepherd exclaimed *vade retro!* and hit her a blow in the chest while he seized her hand, and failing to get the ring off easily, applied his teeth to the task. The nun sank down in tears, seemingly prostrated by the loss. Then her veil was taken off, and her face uncovered, revealing the shaven head. Ashes were sprinkled on her and she was exhorted to amend. The final ceremony is omitted in England from fear of an action for assault and battery. The obdurate nun is conveyed to the gate of the convent and kicked out.

The reader will judge from this article that our opinion of *Superiores* is rather low. It is well formed. A Superior rises to power by trickery as a rule, or from cunning and hypocrisy. Ability to get money from the public is a great recommendation. The system is to blame. Where the one in power enjoys exemption from all kinds of privations and miseries, it is natural that the office should be eagerly coveted. No sooner do they get the office than they use it to indulge malicious remembrances of former injuries received in their subordinate state. They have been known to go through horrible torments themselves in order to inflict them on the whole community. For though the rule is binding on the Superior as well as the community, the interpretation of it is left to discretion. Thus, she may allow a nun to retain whatever she chooses consistent with her vow of poverty. A lock of hair of a dead mother has been taken from one as sinful, while another has been allowed visits from all who came.

It is pleasant to turn from the dark side of this picture. And we might have made it still darker by a bare narration of other facts and citation of documents. Sufficient has been said to show that conventual life is unnatural and its best specimens are so despite the system. Where the Sister of Charity is found in filthy, squalid lanes and streets soothing the dying, feeding the hungry, nursing the abandoned child, teaching the infant lips to pray; or braving the pestilence that walketh in darkness, standing firm where all have fled, facing death in his most loathsome form, vice in its hideous revelry, despair in its wall of agony—there is a true woman rising to heroism by the transforming might of the love of Jesus. She who has a hungering for love that can never be satisfied, for whom no children impatient wait, and whose benign presence blesses no home—unselfish, uncalculating does her Savior's work, looking only for His smile. Monachism does not produce this spirit. It has been seen in Protestants too. How many brave women faced death in the battle field, in the thickest carnage of the fight, in most awful dangers, to bring consolation and help to the defenders of our altars and homes! It is the same motive power—the all-constraining love of Jesus.

THE UNIFICATION OF THE URSULINES.



A GREAT and long desired work was brought to a happy conclusion when on November 28, 1900, the Holy Father gave his formal approbation to the work of unifying the Ursuline communities of the entire world. The new organization will be known as the "Canonically United Ursulines."

The Ursulines as a religious foundation are three hundred and sixty-five years old. St. Angela Merici is their founder. They date from that period of religious activity immediately before the Council of Trent, when Italy particularly was stirring with evidences of awakened life. The peculiarities of their organization placed them largely under the authority of the bishops, and made the various houses self-governing. They assumed as their special vocation the education of young girls, and many of the communities added a fourth vow to that effect. They were the first to cross the Atlantic, and in the very year (1639) that John Harvard started the small school which ultimately became the great Harvard University, Mother Mary of the Incarnation was gathering about her at Quebec the daughters of the French settlers as well as the maidens of the Indian tribes. Later on the Ursulines came to Massachusetts, but the spoliation and burning of their convent at Charlestown is not the proudest chapter in the history of New England. There are now in this country twenty four communities with 998 nuns, teaching over 10,000 pupils. In the entire world there are over 11,000 Ursulines. Two thousand nuns wearing the Ursuline habit and following the rule were represented in the first chapter held in Rome last November, but since the formal approbation of the Holy See many more communities have identified themselves with the newly consolidated order.

This great work of unification has not been brought about without meeting with many difficulties, but the whole matter has been handled with such tact, as well as consideration for the immemorial customs of venerable institutes, that the most harmonious relations have resulted. When the Holy Father blessed the work he reserved to himself the privilege of rati-

fying the choice of officers by the general chapter. The delegates chosen by the various houses met in Rome on November 15. There were nine nuns there from America. The chapter was opened by a discourse from Cardinal Satolli, who was selected for this honor by the Holy Father on account of his ecclesiastical relations with the Ursuline Community in Rome. He said to the assembled mothers that it is the desire of the Holy Father to unify, as far as opportunity offers, the various separated branches of the different religious orders. After passing some compliments to the Ursulines on account of the many illustrious members who have left a name for learning and sanctity, he said: "It is with full knowledge that I speak of your order, having closely observed it in America during my apostolic mission to that country. I wish to salute here, in the person of their representatives, the houses I know so well there, one of which (Galveston) has recently experienced a most unforeseen and most terrible disaster. It is in America I first learned to know, to appreciate, and to love the Ursulines, as it is there also that I understood from daily example the immense strength for good even the least things acquire when vivified by the all-powerful principle of unity.

"By such study and experience I was prepared to enter into the relations with your order which have been assigned me by the Holy Father. Named protector of the group of Rome, Blois, and Calvi, I penetrated into the interior of your spirit, and, to the glory of these three houses, I wish to say here that in the living mirror they afforded me of your abnegation, your devotedness to the church and to souls—in a word, of all virtues, the esteem which I had already conceived for your holy order has grown beyond all power of expression, and with this esteem has grown likewise my affection.

"But while I contemplated in spirit, on account of the examples I had constantly before me, the marvellous strength of supernatural life hidden away in your cloisters, I deplored that this power for good was scattered, without cohesion and without mutual understanding or agreement. Remembering what I had seen in America in the order of secular affairs, I said to myself: 'What could not religious souls of this calibre effect if, thanks to unity of direction, they knew how to concentrate their powers and harmonize their efforts!'

"At this point the Pope spoke. With what joy did I make myself the interpreter of his wishes! I said, if you remember, that I hoped and almost felt certain the century would not

die ere it had witnessed the unification of your glorious order. At the very moment it is approaching its decline you are here assembled to lay the foundation of this much desired union. It is a difficult undertaking, but in nowise above your intelligence, your good will, and your spirit of abnegation; especially is it not above divine grace.

"It is God who wishes this work, and everywhere his finger is seen amid the many trials it has had to undergo; these trials have only imprinted thereon the divine seal of the cross. It will be thus until the end; that is to say, until the entire order has joined you in a perfect unity. It may be that neither you nor I shall witness this happy event, but you, Reverend Mothers, will have had the glory of giving this first impulse to God's work. Your names will be engraved in golden letters in the annals of your order; and what is infinitely better, they will be inscribed in that Book wherein is written for all eternity the things done here below for the love of God and for his greater glory.

"To the work then, Reverend Mothers, under the direction of two men of science and of tested prudence, viz., Monseigneur Albert Battandier, protonotary apostolic—one of the most eminent consultors of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and of Regulars—and of Rev. Father Joseph Lemius, general treasurer of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate as vice-president. Monseigneur Battandier, as president of the assembly, is fully and canonically empowered to direct the order and method of the sessions, and while from afar I watch over the progress of your labors I will beg our Lord, Reverend Mothers, through the intercession of his holy Mother and your patron saints, especially Sts. Ursula and Angela Merici, to bless you and shower upon you the light of his Holy Spirit."

The chapter proceeded under the presidency of Monseigneur Albert Battandier. The largest liberty of thought and freedom of expression were permitted under the rules laid down for the guidance of the chapter, and when it came to the election the triply sealed envelopes containing the choice of each delegate were sent to Cardinal Gotti, to be laid before the Holy Father for papal sanction. The result of the election was read aloud: Rev. Mother St. Julien, of Blois, was elected Mother-General; Mother Ignatius, of Frankfort-on-the-Main, First Assistant; Mother Angela, of the United States of America, Second Assistant; Mother Stanislaus, of Aix-en-Provence, Secretary and Third Assistant; Mother Maria Pia, of Saluzzo in Italy,

Fourth Assistant; Mother St. Sacramento, of Bazas, General Treasurer.

By the election the new generalate is fully established. Still, the details of creating provinces, erecting houses of study and novitiates, have been left to the future. The chapter, however, took care to fix the scheme of organization in the nineteen articles which have now the force of law. Many of the communities which were not represented at the chapter have since accepted the Constitution as approved in this first chapter. The Holy Father was so solicitous that all should be amalgamated that he himself designated the manner in which aggregations may be made.

Previous to the unification there were eleven congregations in the order, differing more or less in the details of their manner of carrying out their vocation as a teaching order. Four of these congregations, viz.: Paris, Bordeaux, Toulouse, and Lyons, were very numerous, and the two first were particularly illustrious by the importance of their houses, the number of their subjects, among whom were to be found women of the noblest rank and even of blood royal, and by their history and vicissitudes. Paris antedates Bordeaux in papal approbation by six years.

When it became evident that the old Monastery of Via Vittoria in Rome was doomed, and when the work of spoliation had begun, a very eminent French house, that of Clermont-Ferrand, generously offered to go to their assistance, with money and subjects; but as the Roman sisters were of the congregation of Bordeaux, they appealed to those of Blois, who generously responded. Again the Paris branch, in the person of Clermont Ferrand, asked for co-operation in the good work; but their generous offers were declined and Blois took the house under its protection.

About two years ago Mother St. Julien, of Blois, congregation of Bordeaux, finding that her position with regard to the Italian houses was uncanonical, applied to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars for necessary enlightenment and legislation. His Eminence Cardinal Satolli was appointed Cardinal Protector, and in an interview he had with the Pope His Holiness expressed a strong desire for the unification of the whole order. The cardinal designated Mother St. Julien to make known this wish of the Holy Father to all the Ursulines of the world. This she did without delay, by means of a circular setting forth the great advantages to arise therefrom,

and the rectifying of many uncanonical things that during the lapse of three centuries had crept into the very best and most conservative houses of the order; a state of things not even suspected to exist in many cases.

The response to this circular was of such a nature that eight months later an official letter was transmitted by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars to all bishops having Ursulines in their respective dioceses, directing them to ascertain by secret ballot the desires of the Ursulines on the subject. In many houses there was complete unanimity of opinion; in others, a large preponderance of those favoring it, and in all, practically, a desire for some kind of modification of existing things. The response to this appeal was of such a nature that the Holy Father commissioned his Eminence Cardinal Satolli to make known to *all houses that had unanimously adhered, with approbation of their bishops*, that he would be much gratified by their sending their superiors or delegates to a general assembly to be held in Rome during the holy year.

Again Mother St. Julien, who had spoken on the subject with the Holy Father several times, in private audiences, was commissioned by the cardinal to send out the invitations to the above-designated communities. As she could not transcend her instructions, many who would willingly have gone to Rome received no invitation, although they would have been welcomed as spectators, but not as partakers in the capitular assemblies. This was clearly shown by a cablegram sent by Cardinal Satolli, in the Pope's name, to the Ursuline convent of Springfield, Ill., in which he stated that while other communities which had not adhered would be welcome, *they*, the Springfield nuns, were obliged to be represented as coming under the head of those indicated by the Pope's words. The Holy Father was greatly pleased with the result of the general chapter, and spoke in heartfelt praise of their obedience to his wish to the Ursulines who were honored with a private audience in the hall of Clement VIII. in the Vatican, December 7, at 12:30 P. M.

Several modifications were made in the schema at the suggestion of the American nuns. While perhaps the conditions of this country were less understood than those of Europe, there was evident a strong desire for enlightenment and full understanding of its needs on the part of the presiding and directing ecclesiastics, and a great readiness to concede any point that would render the order more efficient in its work.

The work of parochial schools will not be interfered with. The cloister will not be enforced wherever it does not already exist or where it would hamper the higher duty of a teaching order. Practically it is done away with in the United States; and while the spirit of cloister is encouraged, its exterior symbolism of grates, etc., is no longer desired in our country. The church does not wish the Ursulines to lose the vast moral support their dependence on bishops gave them, and therefore, while Rome takes to itself several privileges which formerly belonged to the bishops, it legislates that many things must still be done "*intelligentia episcopi*." Subjects cannot be transferred at the will of superiors alone; houses remain independent in money matters, only a small tax on net profits being asked to support general and provincial officers. The lay-sister question under American conditions was satisfactorily arranged; in a word, a great order, consisting of totally independent houses, of eleven different congregations, has been merged into one great homogeneous whole, as a generalate, while retaining many of their former customs and privileges, and this has been done with a unanimity, sweetness, and celerity which appear simply marvellous.

The harmonious outcome of this great work is due largely to the tactful way in which the assembly was presided over. Equal to the sagacity of Monseigneur Battandier was the broad, sweet, and conciliating spirit of Father Lemius, the treasurer general of the Oblates. The sermon that he preached at the outset produced such a profound impression on all present that its spirit seemed to pervade every gathering, and to animate the discussion of every question. It is to this sermon as much as to any other one thing that is due the happy result. We print the sermon in its entirety in the appendix of this issue of the magazine.

THE URSULINE NUNS AND A NORMAL COLLEGE.

BY ISABEL ALLARDYCE.

IN the year 1730 a prominent citizen of Lille, France, wrote in his memoirs: "The Ursuline nuns are held in great esteem here on account of the excellent education they give to young girls, particularly in religious instruction and fine needlework." The reputation so justly earned has in nowise diminished in our own day; on the contrary, the sisters of St. Ursula have always advanced with the times, and their latest innovation, the founding of a Normal College for the instruction of their novices in the higher branches of the arts and sciences, proves that they do not mean their pupils to be in any way behind those who attend the most advanced secular colleges.

St. Angela Merici, when she drew up the rules for her institution, inserted a clause to the effect that the members should always conform to the exigencies of time and place, and make the changes that differences of situation might require. This clause was specially approved by Pope Paul III. in the bull which he published in 1544, and that it was worthy of the notice and approbation it then received has been proved by the effect it has since had upon the progress and work of the order.

The first community of Ursulines was founded by St. Angela Merici in Brescia, her native place, in 1537, and the same year she established another house at Rome. The members at first made no vows, but consecrated themselves entirely to the gratuitous education of children, visiting the poorest parts of the city daily, teaching them in their own homes, and giving young girls a means of livelihood by a thorough training in the various branches of needlework. This community was known as the Company of St. Ursula until 1572, when Pope Gregory XII., at the earnest solicitation of St. Charles Borromeo, raised it to the dignity of a religious order under the rule of St. Augustine. A convent was established at Milan under the personal direction of the saint, the vows of religion were taken, and instead of going out to teach, the

children were assembled in the convent. The fame of the Virgin of Brescia spread throughout Italy, traversed the Alps, and penetrated into France, where communities were so rapidly formed that in less than a century over a hundred convents were flourishing in the "most Christian Kingdom," and before the Revolution nine thousand Ursulines, in three hundred convents, were engaged in the education of young French girls of all classes of society, from the highest to the lowest. The other countries of Europe followed this glorious example, and America did not delay in imitating them.

During the French Revolution the convents of St. Ursula suffered less in proportion than those of more ancient foundation, and the facility with which they sprang up again after the tempest had subsided was surprising. Some of them did not disperse at all, even during the most distressing period, and as soon as peace was restored and the practice of religion again allowed, the Ursulines reopened their schools, and renewed their noble tasks, not, as in the preceding century, under the protection of letters patent and royal approbation, but with that simplicity of soul and earnestness of purpose which are the attributes of those whose sole object is the accomplishment of a holy mission, and the fulfilment of a sublime vocation.

Italy, as we know, has not been free from revolutionary troubles, and the Ursuline Convent at Rome suffered severely through the changes of government. After the invasion of the Papal States, although the tribunal recognized the proprietary rights of the Ursulines, the king confiscated a part of their convent for the use of a public school without religious instruction of any kind. In one day fifty rooms, the half of the garden, and a terrace were appropriated for this purpose, and the nuns were driven to the necessity of turning their cells into class-rooms in order to keep their pupils.

At the same time the funds of the convent were suppressed, and a pension was granted them by the government. Towards the end of the year 1875 they were commanded to give up the best part of their grounds for the building of an Academy of Music, which was not opened until twenty years later; in the interval the nuns were continually disturbed and annoyed by the untimely visits of officious inspectors and contractors, who comported themselves like victors in a conquered land, and by the noisy operations of the workmen who followed to execute their plans.

The Italian law now forbade their receiving new novices, and from 1870 to 1877 thirteen nuns died, leaving only sixteen choir sisters and ten lay sisters. In 1891 the "pensioners of the state" were reduced to the number of nine, most of whom were very old, and a cry of distress then went forth from the convent which found a sympathetic echo in France. The flourishing community of Blois decided to respond to this appeal, and in September, 1894, three sisters went from this house for the purpose, according to their own expression, "of relighting near the tomb of the Apostles the almost extinguished lamp of St. Angela."

How well they have accomplished their mission the handsome new convent at Rome, completed in September, 1896, eloquently testifies.

The house at Calvi has also suffered from the ravages of war, and endured all the horrors of a veritable siege. In 1798, during the French invasion, six thousand Neapolitans took refuge behind its strong walls, and thus protected, held out for some time against the enemy; but the French troops finally effected an entrance and installed themselves in the convent, and the sufferings of the nuns during the stay of these unwelcome visitors are a matter of history in the order to this day.

The funds of this house also were confiscated, and there was not a single profession within its walls for thirty years; but the convent of Blois came forward once more, and in May, 1895, sent three of their nuns to Calvi, where they were received with the greatest joy and enthusiasm, and escorted to their new home amid the acclamations of the whole population. The heart of the people had not changed with the laws of the country.

Blois has given new life to the two convents of Rome and Calvi, but up to the present each house has been distinct and independent of the other. According to the law of Italy, these institutions, as independent monasteries, have not the right to exist, and are menaced with extinction if the arm that protects them should be for an instant withdrawn. A closer union was considered desirable and necessary to the welfare of the order, and after serious reflection it was decided to unite the three houses under one superior-general, resident at Rome. The Pope was consulted on the subject, and not only consented to the new departure but highly approved of it as being in perfect accordance with the spirit of the foundress, who,

when she made her famous clause, must have foreseen that the changes of time would necessitate change of rule and regulation.

As soon as the union had received the approbation of the Holy Father, Cardinal Satolli, who was closely associated with the order during his stay in the United States, was appointed Cardinal Protector of the Congregation of Ursulines, and was requested by the Pope to make known to the Ursuline convents of the whole world that they would be for the future all united under a superior-general residing at Rome.

Beneficial results are already apparent as the fruit of this union. A project that has been contemplated for years, but which would have been impracticable had the houses remained independent of each other, is now under consideration, and will be put into execution with as little delay as possible. This is the establishment of the Normal College at Blois before mentioned, for the advanced instruction of the novices in the higher branches of education.

It is necessary that communities of an educational order should have teachers equal to the demands of modern systems of education, and the object of the college is to accomplish this satisfactorily, and keep each community supplied with an adequate number of fully qualified teachers. It will be conducted by those sisters who have gained their experience by many years of teaching in different countries, assisted by ecclesiastical professors who have taken their academic degree.

The greatest encouragement has been given to the promoters by the highest dignitaries of the church, and it is expected that all the convents of the order will aid the enterprise by sending those novices who show special talent for teaching, and taste for the arts and sciences, that they may receive the advantages here offered them, and so become competent to train the minds and develop the tastes of the brightest intellects placed in their charge.



THE EVE OF TAKING THE VEIL.

MANY hours had passed since the toll of the midnight bell, and still Gertrude sat on a low cushion in front of the altar-table, at which, since she came to Rome, her prayers had been poured forth. Her arms leaned on the table, and her fevered brow rested upon them. Suddenly some hidden chord of memory was touched, and a vision of her childhood arose before her. Her early days had hardly been what could be called happy. They had been too full of unsatisfied longings, of nameless yet high aspirations, of deep thoughts and gushing feelings, marred by all around her, and hardly understood even by herself. A thirst of soul had been the one unvarying consciousness of her being. But there had been bursts of sunshine over her soul, the more intensely bright and beautiful, because of the shadows that had gone before and succeeded them. It was such a moment that memory now brought back, like a gleam of sunlight on some tree or tower that arises bright and fair, in the traveller's retrospective view, while all around is wrapt in shade. That light of memory fell upon a quiet spot in the woods of Delamere, a mossy bank by the side of a tiny cascade, and then it brought to view the hour when the deep imaginings of that young girl who sat by the fountain's margin, had been suddenly echoed, and for the first time, by the pages of the unfortunate but high-souled bard, whose volume lay upon her lap. The sudden gush of tears glittering like dew-drops on the page, yet arrested in their flow by the ecstasy of hope, that like a flood of sunlight had passed into her heart—the wandering, half-startled gaze, riveted on the shapes of beauty that seemed to people the future to which her soul pressed forward—all passed as a vision now before the eyes of that lonely one, and then came the chilling consciousness that the spell was broken, the dream was passed, youth's sunshine fled for ever, and youth's bright hopes scattered at her feet. Tears had gushed forth as that bright scene rose before her, but they were dried in their fountain now, for memory of later days had arisen with all its thrilling rapture, with all its blighting woe. Gertrude bowed her head on her clasped hands—she felt that she was alone, and the long choked fount gave forth its waters, and the full burst of anguish rushed—and oh what moments were these in which the full tide of anguish was permitted to flow unchecked over the waste of that ruined heart! On that spot, leaning on the altar, a short and fevered slumber towards morning surprised Gertrude's worn frame. In that sleep she was again at Delamere, again its old halls and deep embowering woods were around her. She fancied that the bells of the village church were calling to the early worship there, and she awoke. The heavy toll of the convent bell was floating on the still morning air. The present in all its reality rushed in one moment over Gertrude's vividly awakening mind. Delamere, with its shady groves and woodland melodies, receded from her mental gaze, and the glowing skies of Italy, the mournful sound of that heavy bell, and the cloister's pall that waited to receive her, hastened to fill their place.

THE NOVICE, OR THE CONVENT DEMON.

LEITCH RITCHIE

The Philadelphia Album and Ladies' Literary Portfolio (1830-1834); Sep 28, 1833; 7, 39;

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from the world by a black veil, might in other circumstances have fired half the hearts of Germany; the palatine himself might have sued for a hand so fair, when animated by blood so noble; and the heirless of his house might have been the mother of a line of princes. Regret, however, was now in vain; her noviciate had almost expired; and, in another week, the blooming Juliet of Leibenstein would become the nun Ildeganda.

But with regard to the Wildensteins, the baron's position had lately altered for the better. His old enemy was dead; and the young baron, one of the most celebrated knights of the time, cared more for tournaments and single combats than for wars of interest or revenge. He was, besides, addicted to the effeminate pleasures of poetry and sentimental love; and spent in the society of the dames and damsels of Mainz all the time which he did not throw away in improving his estates, rebuilding ruins, and exploring antiquities.

As for Juliet, she was more an object of admiration than of pity. Her beauty was of that sort which is termed radiant. There was something, indeed, so ethereal about her, that she gave one the idea of a being of a purer, brighter, and happier world. Her heart was at once warm and light, her spirits buoyant, and her temper gay almost to childishness. Her musical laugh, as it echoed through the convent garden, called a smile into the face of the sternest nun in the sisterhood; and when she appeared, a gleam of sunshine seemed to fall on many a cold and dark and withered heart.

The convent walls were the horizon of Juliet's hopes and fears; for she had never known, and but rarely seen, the world beyond. Within their boundaries there was enough for the exercise of all the affections her heart yet knew. She had there her long, deep friendships, and her shallow, short-lived enmities; her gentle charities, and even her proud ambitions. There were mirth and mourning, comings and goings, sickness and even death. She might herself look forward, through her family interest, to the very highest offices in the community, to the abbess-ship itself; and in the mean time she amused herself with resolving, if ever the fortunate day of her accession arrived, to promulgate a law against being unhappy, and to admit into her dominions only bright faces and joyful hearts.

At present, more especially, the approaching ceremony of Juliet's taking the veil kept the minds and tongues of the dames of Saint Ildeganda in full employment; but even this interesting topic now began to be rivalled by another of a different nature. The reader is aware that in those days the Evil One amused himself with walking to and fro upon the earth, in spite of the countless saints of the catholic regime; and it was, therefore, no very uncommon thing to see him as he passed by, or at least to *feel* his presence, and then describe him to the outward faculties by the perceptions of the inner ones. As yet, however, our nuns had only talked of the experience of others, and repeated, whisperingly, as they narrowed the circle round the winter hearth, the thousand strange stories which haunted the world, like the phantoms they described. But now the conversation became more serious.

How the devil thought of, visiting so retired and holy a place as the little convent of Saint Ildeganda no one could imagine; but the fact was only too well established. He had been seen in the garden, he had been seen in the west corridor, and he had been seen in visions. At one time, he appeared in the likeness of a tall man, ornamented with horns; at another, he was a black dwarf, with cloven feet; and at a third, he wore his head under his shoulder, like the neighbours of the anthropophagi. The remarkable circumstance was, that the spirit disclosed himself indiscriminately to the wise and the foolish, the credulous and the sceptic; and at last, to allay the ferment, father Gottlob was sent for to a neighbouring monastery, that his opinion might be taken on the subject.

Father Gottlob was looked upon as a kind of saint in the district; and indeed there was something so strikingly intellectual in his venerable face, that you saw at once in him a man who might rise to the loftiest pinnacle, if he only willed it, in any summit whatever. From infancy, however, he had been brought up to the monastic life, and his faculties could only develop themselves in a monastic mould. He knew nothing about men; but was intimately acquainted with the spirits both of light and darkness. He was conversant with the mysteries of the church, but as ignorant as a child of the mysteries of the heart.

The father's arrival at the Convent of Franenlob was an event of some magnitude in the estimation of the nuns; and it may be a question whether he, or the devil who had been the means of introducing him, was looked upon as the more distinguished visitor. He was received with as much ceremony as if he had been the pope himself; and at last, when

fairly established in a handsome oratory, he set himself to inquire, with heart and soul, into the business before him. The father, however, with all his ingenuity, could not elicit a particle more information than we have communicated in a single sentence. A shape had been seen in the garden and in various parts of the buildings; and it had vanished suddenly when seen, not by means of the intervention of walls or trees, but when nothing had been near it but the firm earth and the clear air.—The testimonies of the nuns agreed in this, although each, of course, varied according to the character of the individual; but the witness whose account was, in the opinion of the others, the most vague and unsatisfactory, was considered by father Gottlob the most important of the whole. This witness was Juliet of Leibenstein, who was by this time added to the list of ghost seers.

When the beautiful novice knelt before the monk his faded countenance was lighted up by such an illumination as might have been cast upon it by the appearance of an angel; and perhaps some association of the kind did suggest itself to the old man's fancy.

"Have *you*, too," said he, in a tone of surprise, "been haunted by this thing of sin and darkness?"

"I know not, father."

"They tell me that you are pale, tearful, melancholy, you whose life has till now been like a dream of heaven. Is it so?"

"I know not, father. I do not feel as I was wont."

"When did the change take place?"

"Yesterday evening."

"Describe the cause, or the circumstance."

"I was alone in the garden," said Juliet, "and feeling drowsy—"

"Drowsy! ah! ah! that is the time for the enemy. Watch and pray!"

"I sat down upon the violet bank, and soon the shrubs and lowers began to blend and to grow dim, and the songs of the birds were molten into a single strain, slumberous and indistinct, and—and—I believe I fell asleep."

"You dreamed? Of what?"

"Of the world."

"Ah! ah! the old inspiration."

"Oh, no! it was quite another world! There were birds, and flowers, and walks, and gentle deeds, and beautiful thoughts, and dames, and warriors, and dancing plumes—"

"Hold!" cried the monk, indignantly. "And when you awoke?"

"Then I saw *something*."

"Was it tall or short?"

"Not too tall. It was covered either with a cloak or a cloud, and the instant my eyes were fully opened, it disappeared."

"Were you afraid?"

"Startled, but not afraid: In a little while I was so bold as to look into the old dry well, the only place for many yards round, where a human being could have vanished; but nothing was there except a toad, which has lived there as long as I can recollect."

"What was your first thought after awaking?"

"Of my father's castle."

"What!—before your convent!"

"And of minstrel songs."

"Oh!"

"And handsome knights."

"It was the devil!" cried the monk, starting from his seat. He paced for some time in agitation through the room, and then turning to the novice—

"Daughter," said he, "the evil one never acts without a motive," and till now I have been puzzled to discern the cause of his visit. It would be absurd to suppose that he comes merely to frighten the sisters; for in reality there is nothing so wholesome to the soul as fear. *You* are his intended victim! It is to you he has revealed himself, (not in hideous but noble form, and not in thoughts of terror, but of beauty and delight. The mystery in which he has shrouded his incarnation, is meant to awaken your curiosity; and I feel confident it will speedily be thrown aside. Fear not, however, for I am with you. The only directions I can give you in the meantime, are to pray and continue steadfast.—Should you see the apparition again, (which I shall endeavour to prevent,) repeat a paternoster aloud, and call upon the Lady Ildeganda, and, if evil, it will instantly vanish."

Father Gottlob did not content himself with using only spiritual means. He examined carefully every inch of the premises, and especially descended in person into the old well, trying its walls, stone by stone, with a hammer. He then, to the grief and horror of Juliet, ejected the toad from its ancient domain, and threw it beyond the precincts of the convent, and finished this part of the business by burning incense in the well, and reciting over it the most approved formulæ for the expulsion of devils.

It seemed, indeed, as if the very presence of the

holy father had been able to keep the evil one at bay, for the shape remained invisible from the instant of his arrival. The nuns by degrees recovered their spirits, and began joyfully to prepare for the divine bridal of the novice; and all things at last returned to their usual tranquillity—except the heart of poor Juliet. She was still in a dream; she still sighed, and trembled, and shed tears; the ideas of the world which had been suggested, she knew not how, still haunted her fancy: the barb had stuck.

The day had now arrived when she was permitted to pay a farewell visit to the abode of her ancestors and both baron and abbess united in exhibiting as much splendour as was possible upon the occasion. Owing to the feud with the young baron Wildenstein, which had never been formally concluded, the procession partook as much of the military as of the religious character; for, although the immediate escort of the novice consisted of twelve monks, this was followed and preceded by a strong body of knights and men-at-arms. Arrived at the castle of Leibenstein, she was received by her kinsmen with more respect than affection, and by the baronet himself with more grief than either. He looked, with all a father's pride, upon the beautiful girl before him, just touching upon womanhood, and thought with a bitter sigh of his bargain with Saint Ildeganda.

As for Juliet, she was amused, delighted, and bewildered. Never had the world appeared so bright and glorious. She was herself a queen—a goddess: every tongue blessed her, every eye worshipped her. Never was a day so happy and so short! The time of parting had arrived before she fancied it was noon; and with a saddened heart, and a thoughtful brow, she at length tore herself away from the unholy enchantments of the world, and began to retrace her steps to Franenlob.

"Two and two, brothers," said one of the twelve monks; "six of us before the palfrey, and four behind, and one at each side of the damsels of Leibenstein."

They arranged themselves in this order, but there was one left. In vain the director of the procession counted, then rubbed his eyes, blessed himself, and counted again; there was still a thirteenth monk! The men-at-arms, however, who formed the van of the march, were already in motion; and those behind, emboldened by good cheer and abundance of wine, pushed upon the religious convoy with laical rudeness. There was no time, therefore, to detect the intruder; and the directing brother, consoling himself with the idea that a discovery must be made at the postern of Saint Ildeganda, began to step out like the rest.

"What a lovely prospect!" said Juliet, hardly conscious that she spoke aloud. "With what exquisite tranquillity the sun forsakes this beautiful world, to sink behind those stern and rugged mountains!"

"This beautiful world will be his again to-morrow," remarked one of the brothers by her side. Juliet started, she knew not whether at the voice or the words, and threw a glance of momentary alarm in the direction of her convent. She sighed deeply.

"The sun," pursued the monk, "does not sink into a grave—or into a *cell*. He goes to illumine other worlds, and gladden other eyes."

Juliet blushed, she knew not why. It seemed as if the voice was familiar to her ear; although, if so, she must have heard it only in her dreams, since her male acquaintances on the earth were so few as to be easily recognizable.

"Father," said she, at last, hesitatingly, "have I ever seen you before?"

"Yes," replied the monk; "in the garden of Saint Ildeganda, near the old well."

Juliet shrank and trembled. She would fain have addressed some one she knew; but as the crows of the whole party were drawn over their faces to protect their eyes from the glare of the setting sun, which was yet strong, it was impossible for her to tell that she was surrounded by a troop of spirits.

"I could not have seen you, then, for I was asleep!" she faltered at length, thinking it necessary to say something.

"Oh! that is nothing," replied the monk, and he raised his cowl sufficiently to allow his face to be visible, although to her alone. "Do you know me, Juliet?" said he, softly.

"Yes—no—yes!" stammered the novice, confounded and alarmed; for it was a face that recalled distinctly the apparition of the garden, and which her fancy had since dwelt upon repeatedly in her dreams.

"Do you wish to see me again?" he continued.

"Yes—no!"

"Yes!" said the stranger, smiling exultingly; and at the moment the procession halted at the gates of Franenlob.

Several knights pressed forward to assist the novice to dismount; but the directing brother called out sternly to the monks to stand fast,

"Ay, ay," replied they, for they had all noticed with anger, the augmentation of their party to an unlucky number, "let us see who is this we have among us!"

They placed themselves in a line against the gate; and when counted, it was found there were just twelve monks! This strange incident struck the whole party with surprise and consternation; and it was observed that the novice, whose face had been before unusually flushed, became deadly pale.

When fairly entered within the walls, Juliet was encircled by the younger nuns, wild for news of the world. In vain she pleaded fatigue; in vain the bell sounded the hour of retirement; this was an occasion which did not come every day; and, sheltering themselves behind the privilege of the novice—always greater as the time of their final extinction approached—they carried her off into the garden, and seated her with playful voice upon the violet bank, where the rays of the setting sun always lingered the longest. Juliet at length was fairly rallied out of her depression, and even on a spot like this lost all sense of alarm, surrounded by the gleesome sisters.

When in the midst of her simple story, however, she was interrupted by a trembling of the earth.

"An earthquake! an earthquake!" cried one of the nuns—"but, holy saints, what is that?" and she pointed with horror to the old well, from which a volume of smoke was seen slowly rising. At the sight the nuns fled shrieking to the chapel; but Juliet, overpowered with fatigue and emotion, sank upon her knees.

The column of vapour rose majestically, till it was illumined in the centre by a vivid flash; when a groaning, rumbling noise, resembling distant thunder, came from the earth, and the shape stood before her.

"Holy Saint Ildeganda!" cried the novice—"Oro pro mihi!"

"Amen!" said the stranger. Juliet recited the *paternoster* with a loud and fervent voice; and in like manner the stranger responded "Amen."

"You see," said he gently, "that, as the proverb says, I am not so wicked as I am black!"

"In the name of heaven," demanded the novice more boldly, as she crossed her forehead, "who and what art thou?"

"I am one who would befriend you—for a certain recompense—if you will only afford me an opportunity. At present we have none, for I scent the approach of those by whom I may not be seen. Promise that to-morrow evening—your last evening of liberty—after the holy sisters have retired to rest, you will meet me here!"

"I will not promise!" replied Juliet, gathering courage from indignation.

"Then I must visit you in your cell," said the stranger, coolly.

"Oh, yes, I will—I do promise!" The shape disappeared.

What Juliet's reflections were that miserable night, it was not for a simple pen like ours to describe. Father Gottlob, it appeared, was right, and the visit of this unknown being was to her. Moreover, her interest and curiosity had indeed been excited by the indistinctness of his first appearance; and that part of the mystery, as the monk had truly predicted, was not laid aside. The stranger had come to befriend her—and for a recompense! What recompense? The novice shuddered, as a thousand tales of horror crowded upon her memory. But, on the other hand, so far from having been discomfited by her prayer and invocation, he had replied Amen! Had an evil spirit then power to turn even the holiest offices of religion into a mockery? Were good spirits permitted to haunt the world in smoke and flame, and thunder and earthquake? Could aught that was wicked lurk in a form so beautiful, a voice so melodious, and expression so noble and free?

The last part of poor Juliet's inquiries was made with a beating heart and flushing cheek. The stranger, compared with the monks she had seen, was like an angel, and with the rude knights of her father's household, like a hero or a demigod. His face, even when seen so indistinctly as to resemble the phantom of a dream, had haunted her like a prediction; and his voice had lingered in her ear like some magical melody of youth, even when as yet she was scarcely conscious of having heard it at all. These were dangerous speculations; and Juliet felt that they were so. An idea of destiny, dark, blind, and uncontrollable, began, at length, to mingle with her dreams; and terrible as the desperate thoughts that rose like spirits in her meditations, she sprang wildly from her couch, and throwing herself before the crucifix, spent the remainder of the night in prayer.

Mute, pale, and haggard, the once gay and blooming novice crept through the convent on the following-day like a condemned criminal. The nuns had almost forgotten their fright in anticipation of the ceremony of the morrow; but some of the elder sisters, as they went about the preparations, shook their heads wisely and muttered—"It is of no use!" The hours crept on. A beautiful morning grew into a rich afternoon; and the afternoon dissolved into a heavenly evening. The convent bell called the weary virgins to repose; the porters bolted yawningly the gates for the last time; the sound of retreating steps and closing doors died away; and all was silence within the precincts of Saint Ildeganda.

All was silence, but not absolutely solitude. A

single figure might have been observed flitting through the courts, now pausing as if to listen, and now gliding forward as freely and as noiselessly as a spirit. It at length entered the garden, and Juliet in her white dress, and the white veil of her novice, might indeed have been taken rather for some poetical creation of fancy, than for a daughter of sin and tears.

She paused upon the violet bank; and crossing her hands upon her bosom, said in a clear, steady, but sweetly mournful voice—"Lo, I am here!"

The shape stood before her.

"Lady," said he, in a sad and almost solemn tone—"to-morrow the gates of the world are closed upon you for ever. Even I, who willingly abandon a loftier destiny to haunt the steps of Juliet of Leibenstein, must never dare to look upon the face of the nun of Ildeganda! Do you know what you forsake? Have you ever listened to the prattle of children or the whispers of love? Have you ever seen a mother weeping tears of joy over the cradle of her first-born? Have you ever prayed beside a deathbed, fenced around from evil influences by the holy connexion of love and kindness which continued even beyond the grave? Do you feel the meaning of the magical word *home*? In a word, do you know the world which you fly from?"

While the tempter spoke, Juliet trembled from head to foot, but not with fear. His words fell like rain-drops upon her parched bosom, calling up from its recesses, a thousand beautiful thoughts and profound feelings which she had never dreamed of. The novice felt a thrill of mingled fear and delight as she was conscious of the upspringing of the flowers of the heart; but, struggling against the delusion, she answered faintly—

"I know the world. It is a theatre of sin, and strife, and blood, and tears. Its love is chance—its friendship deceit—its pleasure folly—its religion heresy!"

The stranger shook his head.

"It is even worse than you think, Juliet," said he—"and far better. It is as pure as yonder sky, when the azure and gold are discoloured by innumerable spots of dark vapour; it is as fertile as this garden, when showers and sand are intermingled with vegetation. But if the good fly from the world, it is they who are to blame if it become all bad. We lose time, however; my purpose is to show you, to-night, what you should do to-morrow," and he took the hand of the novice.

"I do not desire to see it," said Juliet, shrinking.

"What! Take care—you have not spoken truth!"

The novice blushed; but as she found herself the next moment caught up in the arms of her stranger, she had nearly fainted with terror and surprise.

"Fear nothing," said he; "inhale this perfume, and it will support you."

She suffered him to hold something to her face, and immediately dropping her head upon his shoulder, she lost all consciousness of her actual situation.

Every thing around her was indistinct and confused. She felt as if in a dream, in which she imagined herself to be rushing, wheeling, and whirling through the air. The first acute perception was of intense cold; but this gradually subsided, and when at length, as the idea of motion ceased, she opened her eyes, she found herself in a glow of warmth.

They were in the open country, surrounded by groves, and hills, and valleys, and streams; and the convent of Franenlob was not even in sight. Juliet, who was an enthusiastic admirer of beautiful inanimate nature, felt her soul grow calm under the influence of the place. The sun had sunk behind the mountains in the distance; but threw a stream of glory over the wide west which still illumined the world. The romantic Rhine was seen here and there, in the form of a broad lake, through the ranks of her hundred hills; every eminence around was crowned with woods, to which the mellowed light gave a mystic and religious effect, at once exciting to the imagination, and chastening to the heart.

"This is the world!" said the stranger—what do you think of it, Juliet?"

The novice startled at his voice; for in her admiration of the scenery, she had almost forgotten the unfathomable being to whom she owed the spectacle.

"It is beautiful," said she, timidly—"and more than beautiful—more grand and glorious than I can express." They walked on in silence, till, crossing a rivulet, they entered a natural alcove of flowering shrubs, into which the mellowed light fell still more mellowed through the leaves and blossoms. At the further end were seated two human figures, close beside each other; and Juliet, in the doubtful company in which she found herself, felt her heart warm to her own species. They advanced, and saw that the strangers were a beautiful maiden, whose years were at the confluence of the noon and morning of life, and a youth, with a sunny cheek, just ripening into the rich bloom of manhood. His arm was round her waist; her head reclined upon his shoulder; and their hands were locked together.

"You are mine, fairest and dearest!" said the youth, as the trembling novice passed.

"Thine—thine!" whispered the maiden. Juliet stood still. Her heart was troubled; she gazed upon the youthful pair till tears rose into her eyes, and flowed down her cheeks.

"Are they not beautiful?" said her guide, as he led her close beside them. The young couple neither saw nor heard. They raised their eyes, unconscious of the presence of witnesses, looking apparently through and beyond them. Juliet turned a

look of wonder and terror upon the stranger, as she found both she and he were invisible!

"These," said he, leading her away, "are called lovers, in the language of this world of sin and shame; and to-morrow is their wedding-day."

As the novice walked on musing, she thought of her own nuptials that were to take place at the same time, and started and grew pale.

By and by, they heard a sound of music and festivity, and soon after reached a cottage where a joyful company were dancing on the green. They were young men and women in their holiday dresses, and looked love and laughter from their sunny eyes as they flew through the dance. Some old people sat by the door, at a table on which were placed wine and fruit. They kept time with their hands, snapping their fingers and shouting gleesomely to the dancers; and ever and anon an old man would jump from his seat, compelled by the united magic of music and memory, and try a spring upon the ground, then shake his head and sit down laughing. The novice, whose heart was naturally disposed to the sin of innocent merriment, could hardly refrain from clapping her hands. She quickened her pace unconsciously as she advanced; and at length, taking advantage of the excuse afforded by a slight deafness, fairly skipped to the measure of the inspiring pipes. When she saw, however, that even when they passed through the ring, and felt the waving of the dancers' garments, their presence was unknown and unseen, her brow again grew sad, and she turned a look of distrust at her companion.

"This," said he, "is called *recreation*, in this world of sin and wo!"

They walked on in silence as before, till the cortege of the sun had completely disappeared behind the heights of the west. The air became chill; the winds of evening began to rise and murmur through the trees; and a dim, heavy, grayish hue spread itself abroad upon the world, covering hill and plain, and grove, and river, as with a veil. Juliet looked anxiously around. The cold seemed to strike to her heart; her spirits were depressed; and whether she thought of her convent or of the world, she could hardly restrain her tears. The stranger in the meantime walked by her side, wrapped in his mantle, tall, calm and beautiful, like one of those images of lofty pride and indomitable courage, mingled with all manly gentleness and grace, which haunt the virgin dreams even of a nun.

They arrived at a cottage so deeply embowered in woods that they had not seen it before. The possessors appeared to be of a still lower class in society than any they had yet seen; for every thing proclaimed the presence of extreme poverty. The stranger led his protegee to the window, and she looked in.

Seated by a bright fire there was a pretty young woman, although apparently the mother of half a dozen children, that were scattered about the room, in various employments or amusements. She was busily engaged in preparing the family supper; while one boy was seated on the floor mending a net, another was cutting bread, and a third mediating between the younger fry and a dog, with whom they were engaged in a playful contest. Suddenly the latch was raised, and the whole party started up. A man, habited like a wood-cutter, with soiled dress and a wearied look, entered the apartment. "Father! father!" shouted the children, as they sprang toward him. One seized his hatchet to lay it aside; another his coat that hung over his shoulder; a third tugged at his soiled and heavy boots; and the rest clung round his legs. He was seated, with loud cries, in his chair of state, and took the two youngest on his knees, and embraced them all, one by one. His brow cleared, his eye grew bright, his look of weariness fled; and when his wife, who had hardly seemed to notice him, except by her smiles, so busily was she engaged in removing his supper from the fire, suddenly threw her arms round his neck as she passed, and kissed him, he strained them altogether in his arms.

The novice, at a scene so new, so interesting and so delightful, could not restrain her emotion. She felt a sense of suffocation in her throat, that was only relieved by a gust of tears.

"Juliet," said the stranger, "is not that beautiful?"

"Heav-en-ly!" replied Juliet, sobbing as if her heart would break.

"That is what we call *domestic happiness*, in this world of sin and folly!"

They had lingered so long at the window, that when they raised their heads, they saw that the moon had risen, and spread a new scene of enchantment around them. Leaning on the arm of the stranger, whom she no longer feared, Juliet walked on, immersed in a reverie, so compounded of the sweet and the bitter, that she knew not which predominated.

"Juliet," said he, quickly, pausing suddenly, "you have seen—not the world—but a portion of what the world can bestow, even in the humblest walks of life. You already shun the convent, its joys, its virtues, and its uses. Choose between them. I pledge myself (and you know my power) that you shall be free to follow your choice."

He sprinkled something upon her face, and her head instantly sank upon his shoulder. When she raised it, she was standing alone, on the violet bank, in the garden of Saint Ildeganda.

The great day had at length arrived, and the sisters, getting up early, prepared for the important ceremony which was to give a new bride to the church. There was something so strange in Juliet's manner, that they supposed her imagination to be

bewildered by the awful circumstance in which she was placed. She could not rest even at prayer; she wandered from cloister to cloister, from cell to cell, as if looking for something that she was surprised and uneasy not to find. Then she traversed the garden, gathered a flower upon the violet bank, and gazed long and earnestly into the old well. As the hour approached, she became paler and paler; and when the sisters arrayed her in her bridal dress, she looked like one who would better become the garments of the grave.

At every new arrival of the visitors, she started and flew to the window, and then turned away ringing her hands. When the Baron at last came, and would have received her in his arms, she sank at his feet, and clasped his knees.

"Father —" she said; but the attempt was vain; her voice was choked, and drooping her head, she sobbed long and bitterly. When she rose, her manner was calm and her step firm, although her face was not simply pale, but as white as marble.—She was led into the chapel, and the solemn service of the dead alive commenced.

When some progress had been made in the ceremony, the novice leaned so motionless against the altar, that the spectators imagined she had become insensible; and the stir, amounting to disapprobation, was heard among the visitors.

"Daughter," said brother Gottlob, approaching her, "awaken, I beseech you. Your manner would almost seem to give our friends to understand that we have used compulsion; and you know this is not the case."

"I know it," answered Juliet, quickly; "but I am betrayed and abandoned!"

"By whom, in the name of the Virgin?"

"By a demon! But it matters not—there—" and shook out her hair till it rolled in gloomy volumes even to her feet—"there—it is my own will!" and she held it up to the sacrificial steel.

"Hold!" cried a voice, at the moment, near the door, that shook the chapel like a clap of thunder; and Juliet, bursting with a wild scream through the circle of priests and nuns, threw herself into the arms of the stranger.

While the monks threatened the intruder with their curses, and the sisters fled shrinking to the altar, the knights and men-at arms drew their swords.

"Lord of Wildestien," cried the Baron of Leibenstein, firmly, "worse than madman! do you dare at the same instant to insult your Saviour and dishonour your enemy? Give up the infatuated girl, or I will stab her in your arms!"

"I am no madman," said the young baron, supporting Juliet with his left arm, while he waved away the phalanx of foes with his right; "hear me but for an instant, and I shall prove to you that I mean no outrage either upon God or man."

"This territory, you are aware, belonged many years ago, to my ancestors; and it was therefore with more pleasure than surprise that I discovered, in the course of some improvements, a subterraneous communication between the castle of Wildenstein and the convent of Franenlob. The use I made at first of my knowledge was one, I grieve to say, of mere frolic, for which I shall duly pay both in purse and penance to the holy St. Ildeganda. But when I beheld the damsel of Leibenstein, my heart was changed. I loved her. I saw, or imagined, that she deceived herself in supposing that she had a call to be the spouse of the church; and by the contrivances of skillful mechanists, who made one of the huge stones of an old well serve as a door, so nicely adjusted, that the hand of the artificer could not be traced even by father Gottlob, I obtained the means of putting her to the trial. At her visit to Leibenstein, by wearing a monkish habit over my armour, and dropping the former and closing my visor when necessary, I mingled undetected among the crowd of knights and ecclesiastics on the march. Last night my suspicions were fully confirmed. She then saw the world for the first time—although only a world of actors selected from my own vassals; and I know it to be my duty, as a true son of the church, to prevent it from receiving a hand far fitter for that of the baron of Wildenstein!"

This explanation excited a murmur of surprise among the throng; and the old baron of Leibenstein was observed to sigh deeply, and turn an unloving look upon the statue of Saint Ildeganda.

"I have an oath! I have an oath!" said he;—away! depart in peace!"

"Be it mine to dissolve the oath," cried the young lord; "if it will not unloose, it must be cut in twain. What, ho! for Wildenstein!" and the door of the chapel flew open, and discovered the court and garden filled with its knights and men-at-arms.

Is it unnecessary to tell the result? The baron of Leibenstein neither kept his oath nor lost his honour; the church was robbed of an unwilling bride; and Wildenstein gained a lovely and devoted wife. In leaving the convent, Juliet took with her the beautiful simplicity that had shed a halo over her noviceate; and in the course of a long, happy, and useful life with her demon lord, realized all the pictures with which his successful stratagem had delighted her imagination in an humbler sphere.

The Novice.

BY MRS. J. R. SPOONER.

During the period allotted for the completion of my school education at Quebec, (which was at that distant time, said to contain the best Ladies' Seminary in the British Provinces,) I had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with several of the inmates of "The General Hospital," and also of learning some circumstances connected with these, which I think will not be uninteresting to the reader. In the first place, I will mention that this institution was established as early as the year 1633, by the second Bishop of Quebec, who expended a hundred thousand crowns (an enormous sum in those days,) on the buildings, which were intended as a general Hospital for invalids, and as an asylum for those who were afflicted with incurable disease. A separate building was appropriated to the reception of the insane; and a certain number of the aged of both sexes, who were incapable of providing for themselves and had no friends who were able to assist them, here enjoyed the comforts of a home, and kind treatment from those whose duty it was to attend upon them. This establishment at its commencement, was placed under the care of a Superior, and twelve nuns from the *Hotel Dieu*; but a few years afterwards, the nuns of the General Hospital were made a separate and independent community, and continue so to the present day. Those who are acquainted with the early history of Canada, cannot withhold their admiration of the self denial which must have been exercised by the zealous and benevolent women who left their homes and country for ever, that they might form a religious community in a land of savages; braving the dangers of a long and hazardous voyage, the vicissitudes of a climate so unlike that of their own beautiful France, and undergoing the many privations, sufferings and anxieties to which the early settlers were exposed. Many ladies of the first rank were found among those who thus devoted themselves to such works of mercy as the instruction of the Indian children, the care of the sick and aged, and the clothing and the feeding of the poor. Among these, the name of Madame De La Peltrie is justly celebrated, no less for the courage with which she surmounted many obstacles, than for the self devotion which she manifested in pursuing the task before her. She was a young widow of rank and fortune, and was possessed of no common share of beauty. With these advantages, she doubtless had many temptations to remain in her own country, yet she withstood them, and devoted her wealth, her time, and energies, in fact her life, to the good of the poor in a far off land.* It was this lady who carried into effect the Convent of the Ursulines, which had been lately founded by the Duchess D'Aiguillon, niece of Cardinal Richelieu. Madame De La Peltrie sailed from Dieppe with three nuns, in one of the vessels comprising the Canada fleet; and after a rough passage of three months, and being in danger from the ice which they met, they landed at the Island of Orleans below Quebec, which was then uninhabited. A fire was built as a signal, and they passed the night in a wigwam made of the branches of trees. The fire being observed at Quebec, the Governor sent a canoe to enquire the cause, which soon returned with the intelligence of the arrival of the nuns and Madame De La Peltrie. This event so long and ardently desired by the Colonists, was thought worthy of being celebrated as a fete or holiday. "The shops were closed, and all labor suspended. The troops were under arms, and the Governor at their head received the religious heroines under a salute from the fort. On landing, they reverently kissed the chosen ground; and after the first compliments, were led by the Governor, amid the acclamations of the people to the parish church, where the *Te Deum* was sung, and high mass performed, in thanksgiving for their safe arrival."

*On her arrival at Quebec this lady sold her expensive and elegant wardrobe, in order to raise additional funds to further her benevolent intentions, and so anxious was she to have the Ursuline Convent completed, that she worked herself in the garden and grounds attached to it.

"Notwithstanding the joyful reception which these nuns met with, such was the poverty of Quebec at that time, that they frequently suffered the greatest privations, even to the want of food and necessary clothing, until they were permanently established, which did not happen for some years afterwards. The Ursuline Convent seems to have been instituted with special reference to the education of young females, and down to the present time the daughters of the most respectable Catholic families are educated there." But I have been led into something of a digression, and as my readers are perhaps impatient to hear the story of "The Novice," I will at once conclude this preamble, and commence forthwith.

Elise Vervenay was the youngest, (and as too frequently happens,) the spoilt child, among a large family of brothers and sisters several years older than herself; and in consequence, although naturally of an affectionate and amiable disposition, she was more wayward and self-willed than became her, and withal at the age of ten was so great a romp, that it seemed difficult to believe that she would ever attain the dignity of a well behaved young lady. Sometime before they have arrived at the age of Elise, the children of Catholic parents are instructed in their catechism, receive their *first communion*, and go to confess; but our heroine showed a great distaste to these duties, and indeed would learn nothing but what she chose. Nature had endowed her with a sweet voice, and she sang like a nightingale. She learned to read too, that she might make herself acquainted with the stories of the Arabian Nights, one of which she had heard read aloud; and but for this circumstance, she might not yet have been initiated into the mysteries of the alphabet.

There is no saying how long Elise would have continued to do just as she pleased, growing up like a beautiful wild flower as she was, without the restraint of cultivation or discipline, had it not been for the interference of an uncle, a brother of her mother, who was the Chaplain attached to the Ursuline Convent, of which I have spoken. Being for some time in poor health, he had obtained permission to leave his duties to the care of another, and to spend some weeks in travelling, and in visiting his relatives, many of whom he had not seen for years. During his absence he spent some weeks in the family of his sister, Madame Vervenay, and the Cure was not a little shocked, when he discovered how negligent her parents had been with regard to the religious instruction of the pet of the family. Many were the lectures and exhortations bestowed on both father and mother, in consequence; the result of which was, that they were convinced that they had allowed their affection for their darling to interfere with her spiritual good, and that by continuing the constant indulgence in which she had been nurtured, Elise would be but poorly prepared to live in a world where the exercise of self-denial, patience, and resignation, is so much needed. But how should she begin to adopt a different course? It was a question difficult to be answered, and indeed it appeared no easy or pleasant task, to either parent, to undo the mischief their own indulgence had worked; and thus situated, they were led to consent to what at first they would not hear of, viz. that Elise should be sent at once to the Ursulines, for the purpose of commencing and completing her education under the instructions of these ladies. It was a sad change to the child, to be translated from home and all its indulgences, to the restraint and rigid discipline of a Convent. Many of the sisters, however, notwithstanding their seclusion from the world, understand human nature, and are remarkably successful in their treatment of the young, winning their regard by the utmost kindness, yet claiming the respect due to their office which their peculiar dress, together with the associations by which they are surrounded, contributes to preserve. Thus they frequently obtain the most unbounded influence over their pupils; many of whom become so attached to their instruc-

tors, that when the period allotted for their stay expires, they express their willingness to remain as permanent inmates of the institution.

Elise, being a stranger, was told, that for the first week, nothing would be required of her, and that she might in the mean time amuse herself by getting acquainted with her schoolmates, playing in the garden, &c.; and she was placed under the more immediate care of Irene St. Margaret, a most excellent woman, to whose good management Elise was chiefly indebted for the change that a few months brought about in her. She possessed naturally a quick perception, and a retentive memory, and when she began to apply herself in real earnest to her studies, her progress was astonishing. Indeed one good sister said it was a *miracle* worked by St. Joseph himself—the patron saint whom Elise herself had chosen on commencing her church duties—others said she learned the better for not having learned before, which I think no unreasonable conclusion. Her parents' delight knew no bounds, at receiving from time to time, the most flattering encomiums concerning Elise from her uncle the Cure; and when after the expiration of a year they visited her at the Convent, they could scarcely believe they saw their own little romping Elise, in the demure looking young lady, attired in the prim cap and dress worn by the Ursuline pupils, to whom they were introduced as their daughter.

Elise remained at the nunnery until she had attained the age of fifteen, having only occasionally visited home for a short season during that period. Her parents now considered her education to be finished, and after having made known their intention to the Superior, arrived in Quebec for the purpose of taking their daughter home. But great was their surprise and vexation, on finding that the latter was not only unwilling to return with them, but declared her intention of remaining in the Convent, and taking the veil as soon as she had attained the necessary age. Her father at first only laughed at her, not believing that she was really in earnest, and on being convinced of her sincerity, still treated the idea as a childish whim, from which Elise would soon be persuaded. But in this he was disappointed. Elise had really been happy during her stay with the Ursulines. The years she had passed there, had much endeared her to the sisters, for whom in return, particularly the good sister St. Margaret—she evinced the warmest attachment; and under the influence of those for whom she felt such regard, it is not to be wondered, that she conceived the desire to follow their example, and to devote her life, ere the temptations and trials of the world began, to the interests of religion, in a manner that she was led to believe, would be at once the most pleasing to God, and the most effectual means of securing her own eternal welfare.

We should do Elise injustice, did we not say that she loved both her parents tenderly, and that she was much affected by the exhortations and entreaties with which they sought to combat her resolution. When her father found that remonstrance was in vain, he proposed that she should return home, and mingle in the amusements of young people of her own age; and if at the expiration of a year, she still continued to be of the same mind, he promised not to oppose her wishes. To this proposal Elise acceded and accompanied her parents home. —*Ladies' Repository.*

(To be continued.)

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THE NUNS OF PORT-ROYAL.*

"AN event," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "which happens sometimes even to philosophers,"

"has happened to M. Cousin. He has fallen in love with Madame de Longueville in person; yes, with the Great Condé's sister. The place in which he has most particularly shown his passion for her is where he has to deal with La Rochefoucauld. He does not speak of him as a judge or a critic would speak, but as a rival. 'She never truly loved but a single person,' says he; 'it was La Rochefoucauld;' and this leads him to add, 'I don't deny it; I do not like La Rochefoucauld.' La Rochefoucauld is for him the great adversary, the rival who, two centuries ago, supplanted him."

The sarcasm launched against M. Cousin by M. Sainte-Beuve was not without a personal motive. The author of the *History of Port-Royal* was the first to rescue the subject from the oblivion into which it had fallen, and he had no sooner entered the holy monastery than he would fain have shut the doors on all after-comers. Among the poachers upon his domain M. Cousin has been the most persevering and successful. In fact, his depredations were not confined to Madame de Longueville. Notwithstanding her noble birth, her remarkable beauty, and the important part which she played in the intrigues of the Fronde, she was, after all, but a secondary actor in the scenes of Port-Royal. A far greater offence of M. Cousin was to have denied to M. Sainte-Beuve the privilege of showing Pascal in a new light. Before his narration could reach the period at which this surprising genius shone forth in all his glory, his discoveries were anticipated, and his principal hero torn away from a frame which, it must be confessed, was too narrow for so illustrious a man. Others joined in pursuit of the game which had been started, and there was even a contest for the right to use the manuscripts preserved

in the public archives. In compliance with an old and mischievous usage, students are permitted in France to borrow and retain as long as they choose the books and documents which are necessary for their researches. The right gives rise to incessant inconvenience and frequent abuses. The manuscript which is taken at first for the honest purpose of investigation may afterwards be kept to prevent a rival from making use of it. Whether this was the motive in the Pascal chase we will not attempt to determine, but certain it is that M. Faugère, who published a new edition of the *Pensées*, was obliged to have recourse to a ministerial order to obtain some papers detained by a fellow hunter. The republic of letters has hitherto rather gained than lost by the emulation which has been excited, but we should be of a different opinion if M. Sainte-Beuve allows himself to be driven away by this irruption into his territory. The hedge sparrow, it is said, forsakes the eggs which have been handled, and, fearful for the safety of an offspring which she is too weak to protect, refuses to give them life. But the stronger eagle fights for her young, and, if an enemy succeeds in ravishing one from the nest, the remainder of the brood does but become the dearer. Let M. Sainte-Beuve copy the example of the nobler bird, and, after an absence already too prolonged, return to his beloved nest of Port-Royal. If M. Cousin has not yet conquered his resentment against his fair Longueville for having been admired by La Rochefoucauld, M. Sainte-Beuve should be more generous, and forgive her for having been loved by M. Cousin.

The monastery of Port-Royal exists no longer. All that remains of it are some shapeless ruins, situated in a dark and marshy valley not far from Versailles. It is supposed to have been founded by Bishop Eudes of Sully, and Mathilda of Garlande, in the year 1204, that prayers might be said there for the happy return of Mathieu I. of Montmorency, Mathilda's

* *Port-Royal*. Par C. A. SAINTE-BEUVE. Paris: 1840-49. 3 vols. 8vo.

husband, who was fighting in the Holy Land. A bull, in 1223, conceded to the convent the privilege of receiving secular ladies, who, disgusted with the vanities of life, might wish, without taking the vows, to give themselves up to God. It was perhaps the admission of these worldly recruits, who were not wholly detached from the frivolities of society, which was the cause of that taste for fashion which was repudiated at the beginning of the sixteenth century by the superior of the house. The inmates had committed the enormity of wearing sleeves which were wider at the bottom than at the top, and the abbess was ordered to have them made narrower. Later it was found necessary to prohibit the use of masks, gloves, and starched linen. These trifles were the symbols of more serious irregularities. The service was not duly attended, the rule of seclusion was violated, and dances and banquets had greater charms than the offices of religion. Such deviations from monastic strictness were then general throughout France. The reform in Port-Royal was brought about by a girl who was forced against her will into the office of abbess, and who not only succeeded in making her community a model of discipline and virtue, but who attracted into her sphere so many persons illustrious for piety, for learning, and for genius, that, of all the institutions of the kind which ever existed, this is the one which has obtained the largest renown and the most universal admiration. No glory was wanting to it—not even the distinction of bearing nobly a long and cruel persecution. The means by which these results were obtained are a rare example of the power of simple and persevering rectitude, and give a perennial interest and importance to the history of “Mother Angélique,” though the house over which she presided is in ruins, and the succession of her disciples was not permitted to continue.

Antoine Arnauld, the representative of an ancient and distinguished family in Auvergne, married the daughter of M. Marion, an *avocat-général*. This M. Marion was a favorite of Henry IV., and obtained from him the abbacies of Port-Royal and St. Cyr, for two of his grand-daughters. The eldest, Jacqueline Marie Arnauld, was then only seven and a half years old; the younger, Jeanne, was six. Abuses of this kind were fre-

quent at that era, but it was not always easy to obtain the ratification of the appointments at Rome; and Antoine Arnauld, who was noted for a famous speech which he had delivered against the Jesuits, was not likely to obtain much indulgence from the Pope. In consequence the fraud was committed of representing the sisters to be older than they were, and, the better to dissemble the truth, they were described not by their true Christian names, but by the names which they received at confirmation, and which became their religious appellations. This was the reason why Jacqueline was ever after called Mother Angélique, and Jeanne, Mother Agnes. The opening of the drama does not prognosticate reform. The next scene in the history was still less promising.

The two child-abbesses, who were set to preside over religious communities long before they were themselves emancipated from the bondage of the nursery, first spent a year together in the convent of St. Cyr, which belonged to Mother Agnes, the younger sister. At the close of a life devoted to humility, she still reproached herself with an outbreak of domineering authority, when, in a quarrel with her elder sister, she asserted her right, if she pleased, to turn her out of her abbey. “She was proud and romantic,” says M. Sainte-Beuve, “to such a degree as to ask God why he had not permitted that she should be born *Madame de France!*” It would be idle to moralize on traits like these. The whole case may be summed in the fact that she was six and an abbess.

Mother Angélique, with whom we are more immediately concerned, next spent two years at the abbey of Maubuisson, the last place which was calculated to inspire a young girl with religious sentiments; for it was presided over by Madame d'Estrées, the sister of the fair Gabrielle, so famous for her beauty, and the visits which the royal lover paid to the convent were an open insult to morality and religion. It was from Madame d'Estrées that the future reformer of Port-Royal was named Angélique at her confirmation. This most assuredly was not a very edifying beginning.

At first Mother Angélique was only the coadjutor of Jeanne de Boulehard, the existing abbess. The latter died in 1602, and her successor, when hardly eleven years old, was definitively installed in her

office, and invested with all its functions and prerogatives. One day when Henry IV. was hunting in the neighborhood, he took it into his head to visit M. Arnauld, who was at Port-Royal with his daughter. The little abbess went out to meet him at the head of her community, and marched gravely along with ludicrous dignity upon thick-soled shoes, some five or six inches high, that she might appear to have the stature of a woman. That merry monarch could not fail to be delighted with the mock-heroic scene. He left with reluctance, and kept shouting as he rode away, "I kiss my hand to Madame the Abbess."

Nothing as yet seemed to foreshadow the changes which were soon to take place. On the contrary, Mother Angélique felt no vocation for a religious life. She regretted the world from which she had been cut off so young, preferred the reading of Plutarch's Lives to her Breviary, and often meditated joining two of her aunts who had embraced the Protestant religion and resided together at La Rochelle. She even desired to marry, for she justly thought that a holy domestic life was more agreeable to the Almighty than the unnatural austerities of a monastic seclusion. By degrees the conflict of her feelings reduced her to a state of melancholy which impaired her health, and she was taken home to be nursed. She was not then sixteen. Her father detected the causes of her despondency, and with the vehemence of will which was the characteristic of his race he one day entered her room with a document in his hand, and said, "Sign this, my child." Awed by the profound respect which she entertained for her father, but her heart bursting with rage, as she instinctively divined the purport of the unread paper, she complied with his demand. She felt that her honor was pledged, that she had definitively engaged herself against her will to lead a religious life. And, in fact, the act was the ratification of her vows; it was her sentence upon herself!

Her health restored, she returned sad but resigned to the convent, which she accepted henceforth for her destiny. The renewal of her vows, it is true, had been obtained by a trick, but it was a trick played by a beloved father. Filial respect threw a veil over the artifice, and the poor child only thought of her signature, and forgot the mode of obtaining it. Religion had as yet no part in her resolution, but it

was close at hand. One evening at the approach of twilight, as she came from a walk in the garden, a Capuchin friar arrived at the convent and requested to preach. A sermon was an entertainment which broke the monotony of the ordinary convent life, but as it was growing late the abbess was on the point of refusing the offer. Suddenly she changed her mind, and ordered the bells to toll. What the Capuchin said she did not herself recollect: but while the discourse, which was on the humility of the Saviour, was proceeding, a complete revolution took place in her feelings. "God so touched me," she said, "that from this moment I found myself more happy to be a nun than I ever before was unhappy at being one." She perceived, however, that the Capuchin preacher was not capable of guiding her in the path which a divine light had just displayed to her, and she kept her emotions to herself. The new thoughts which now agitated her heart, again affected her health, and she was removed to her father's country seat of Andilly. "That dwelling appeared to me so lovely," said the poor girl, "that I would gladly have remained for ever amidst such beautiful scenes, for God had not yet given me the eyes of a Christian." Nevertheless she assumed a coarse dress, lay on a hard couch, and curtailed her sleep to go and pray secretly in the remotest parts of the house. Sometimes she was found inflicting punishments upon herself that she might become accustomed by degrees to bear bodily pain. Dreading the effects of such austerity, her family, who had hitherto employed their endeavors to engage her in a monastic life, now united their efforts to check her enthusiasm. The nuns, when she got back to Port-Royal, were not less averse to the new spirit which had come over her. In spite of relations and nuns she followed her own conscientious convictions, and resolved to persevere. The first change she introduced was to bring back the community to the strict observance of their vow of poverty. It was not the easiest part of the undertaking, for the best were those who were most opposed to the step. They remarked with some reason that when everything was in common, clothes included, (for such was the rule,) all providence would cease, and nobody would have any interest in economizing. Mother Angélique did not hesitate to acknowledge that in a temporal point of view, the rule might

be disadvantageous, but temporal considerations had no longer any weight in her mind. Her principal aim was the spiritual good of her flock. She considered that the sole choice lay between not being abbess at all, or fulfilling to the letter the requirements of the office, and while the contest was pending she was once more seized with a deep melancholy, accompanied by fever. The nuns asked her what made her so sad. She replied that they knew the cause well enough, and that it depended on them to put a period to her grief. "Tell us what you want of us," they said, at last, touched by her sorrow, "and, provided you are satisfied, we promise to do anything." She reiterated that what she required was that they would renounce the system of individual property; and the following day they brought her their clothes. One nun, named Johannet, who was deaf and dumb, had not been informed of what was going on, and it was intended, in consequence of her infirmity, to exempt her from the law; but on seeing the others produce their wardrobes, she guessed the meaning of the action and imitated their example. From that day, which was the eve of St. Joseph, 1609, and which was religiously inscribed in the *Fasti* of Port-Royal, the community of goods was permanently reestablished, and the Mother Abbess was cured of her fever.

There still remained one refractory member in the person of an aged nun, Dame Morel, who fondly cultivated a little garden. She brought everything except the key of this garden. "We all of us have our little garden," says M. Sainte-Beuve, with his usual grace, "and we often cling to it more strongly than to the large one." Dame Morel flew into a passion whenever any nun or father Capuchin sorrowfully spoke to her of that unlawful reservation. At last, one day, when no one had breathed a word on the subject, she surrendered by a sort of inward miracle. She sent in a letter the key of the garden as of a last citadel. In fact, it was the key of her heart.

When Mother Angélique had overcome this difficulty, and established the community of goods, she made up her mind to strike the great blow. She was determined to restore the rule of seclusion, to sever herself from the world, and with her nuns devote herself completely to God. This involved the separation from her fam-

ily, whom she so dearly loved, and by whom she was so tenderly beloved. But the Arnaulds were not to be disunited by this daring act of filial disobedience, by this richly rewarded sacrifice of feeling to duty. One by one, sisters, brothers, mother, nieces, and nephews, came clustering round the young saint whom they began by opposing, most of them attracted by her virtues, her example, and her insinuating charity. She began by drawing to her her little sister, Mother Agnes, abbess of St. Cyr, whom we have already seen priding herself on her official supremacy. In a few months she renounced her once cherished dignity, and took her vows as a simple nun at Port-Royal.

The law courts rose, and Antoine Arnauld, as was his custom in vacations, repaired to Port-Royal. In one of the huge family coaches of the period were the father, the mother, the eldest sister Mme. Le Maître, a younger sister named Annie, who was then fifteen, and the eldest brother Arnauld d'Andilly, who was twenty. It is difficult for us now to realize the full force of the paternal authority of that age, and the immense hardihood which it required to resist its will. Mother Angélique was hardly seventeen, and had never swerved from the most profound obedience, which was seconded by such love as strong minds only are capable of feeling. Prayer was her weapon against the coming attack, and the nuns of her party joined with her in her supplications. She had taken possession, at dawn, of every key, to prevent a surprise, and, with her supporters, waited the arrival of the dreaded coach "like a little force under arms awaiting the enemy." So daring did the act appear, that few of the inmates could believe she would have the courage to persist. At length the noise of wheels was heard in the outer court, and Mother Angélique, advancing to the wicket, announced her resolution to her father, and begged him to proceed to the grated parlor, where alone she could receive him. No sooner did she utter the words, than he flew into a passion, knocked louder than ever at the door, and fiercely demanded admittance. Madame Arnauld joined in the clamor, called her daughter an ingrate, and swore an oath, which afterwards cost her many a tear, that if she was not admitted at once, she would never again set her foot in Port-Royal. M. d'Andilly, with the impetuosity of youth,

went further still, and declared that his sister was a monster and a parricide. The Abbess stood firm. M. Arnauld, unable to prevail by force, had recourse to stratagem. He demanded to see his two other daughters, Mother Agnes and Marie-Claire, intending to rush in as these were let out. But they were sent round by the church door, and the opportunity was lost of surprising the citadel. As they joined the infuriated group, M. d'Andilly poured forth bitter reproaches against Mother Angélique. Mother Agnes immediately took up her defence, observing that her sister had done nothing more than was prescribed by the Council of Trent. "Oh! forsooth," exclaimed M. d'Andilly, excited beyond endurance, "this is a pretty case; here is another little pedant who quotes to us canons and council!" All this while there were some dissentients in the camp, and among them was old Dame Morel, who clung so fondly to her little garden, and who now exclaimed, "It is a shame not to open to M. Arnauld." Mother Angélique was of another opinion, and at last her father, without relinquishing his anger, yielded to her entreaties, and went to the reception room. Pale and agitated, he spoke to her through the grating, of all that he had done for her, and of the love which he bore her. Henceforth he renounced it; he would see her no more, and as a final request he conjured her to take care of herself and not ruin her health by reckless austerities. This pathetic adieu, in which tenderness mingled with resentment, proved too much for the overwrought mind of Mother Angélique, and she fell senseless on the floor. A paroxysm of alarm now took possession of M. Arnauld. He called wildly upon his daughter, he stretched out his arms to the opposing grate, he vociferated with all his might for help, and his wife and children screamed as loudly as himself. The nuns, believing that the uproar was only a renewal of the original contest, kept carefully out of the way, and it was some time before they could be made to comprehend the situation of their abbess. Her first words on opening her eyes was to request her father not to leave that day. She had a couch prepared for herself by the grating; a calm and loving conversation ensued, and Mother Angélique was victorious over her family. Her ecclesiastical superiors afterwards gave permission for Madame Arnauld and her daughters to enter the convent when

they pleased. But the fatal oath was for a year an insurmountable barrier. At the end of that period she heard a sermon in which hasty and foolish vows were declared not to be binding, and she immediately ordered her carriage and set out for Port-Royal. The day of her reappearance was ever after kept as an anniversary in her heart by the delighted Mother Angélique.

The grand contest which had taken place was known in the annals of the monastery by the name of "the day of the wicket." M. Royer-Collard used to speak of the scene as one of the great pages of human nature, and one which was not surpassed by anything in Plutarch. His admiration, all must agree, was not misplaced. The object for which Mother Angélique contended was indeed mistaken, or rather the mistake was in her vocation itself. But what is beyond all praise is, the unflinching adherence to what she conceived her duty—the sacrifice to conscience of every opposing feeling of her heart:

"—unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduc'd, untterrified,
Her loyalty she kept, her love, her zeal;
Nor number nor example with her wrought
To swerve from truth, or change her constant
mind,
Though single."

This was her true glory, her chief distinction, and it was this quality which enabled her to produce such wonderful results.

"Let us," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "recapitulate the actors in the events of the day of the wicket: Mother Angélique, M. Arnauld, Madame Arnauld, their three young daughters—Agnes, Anne, and Marie-Claire—Mme. Le Maître, and M. d'Andilly. Well, these actors or spectators, M. Arnauld excepted, who died in the world respected as an honest man and a Christian, all, with Madame Arnauld at their head, entered finally into Port-Royal." Marie-Claire, who, we have seen, was already domiciled with the Abbess at the time of the battle, had been a lovely child, but was completely disfigured by the small-pox. When she first caught sight of her face in the glass, she covered it with her hands and cried out, "It is no longer I." The involuntary exclamation was true in a sense which she little imagined. It was probably not only her face but her heart which was changed by the

event, and her moral being profited by the destruction of her beauty. Anne, who was six years older, had her religious impressions strengthened by the same disorder. Her convictions continued to gather force until in 1616 she renounced the world for Port-Royal. "When I first entered," she wrote, "I felt a painful void in my soul, and, having mentioned it to Mother Agnes, she answered that I need not be astonished, because, having quitted all the things of the world, and not being yet consoled by God, I was as between heaven and earth. About a year afterwards this void was filled." From this time she considered the convent a paradise. The marshy and unwholesome valley, the damp and narrow cell, seemed delightful to her spirit, soothed by the religious exercises which were indissolubly associated with the locality; and she imagined, as she gazed at the sky, that it was more serene than elsewhere. She once, when she was alone, danced with joy at the recollection that she was a nun, and when she saw one of the sisterhood sorrowful she thought if she did but look at her black veil she would be sad no longer. But mortification was the rule of the house. Her passion was prayer and solitude, and she was subsequently set to perform the uncongenial task of instructing children. For fifteen or sixteen years she continued to obey, but it was, she said, as it were at the point of the sword. Mother Angélique set the example of self-denial. "It would be difficult," wrote her niece, "to find such another piece of serge as she used for her dress—so coarse, rough, loose, yellow, and greasy. What I say of her clothes I might say of everything; she never took for herself anything but the refuse." M. Arnauld had been accustomed to assist in defraying the expenses of the establishment, and she endeavored by economy to dispense with his gifts and render the house self-supporting. In spite of the poverty which resulted, she managed to relieve the poor families in the neighborhood. To the inmates she compensated for the deprivations she imposed on them by redoubling her tenderness. It was on the sick sisters especially that she lavished the tokens of her inexhaustible charity, nursing them and rendering them the most repulsive services. Whenever she was wanted it was almost always in the infirmary that she was to be found. She was discovered there one day

lying on the feet of a sick nun, whom nothing would warm, and she said, with a laugh, that she was performing the office of a blanket. In fact, the irresistible gift of persuasiveness which Mother Angélique possessed, consisted mainly in this, that she was more severe towards herself than towards her flock. She oftener taught by example than by precept. When she had determined upon suppressing the use of meat in the community, she began by trying the practice upon herself. For a month she ate nothing except a piece of omelette, and to conceal the fact, she had it covered with a thin slice of mutton. A petty deception like this does not accord with the nobler proceedings of the holy Angélique; but tricks in some shape or other seem an incurable vice of the Roman Catholic religion. Having undergone the probation in her own person, she invited the rest to repeat the experiment, and abstinence was embraced by the entire community.

Port-Royal set in order, Mother Angélique was called upon to perform the same duty for another establishment. Her former mistress and namesake, Madame d'Estrées, still presided at Maubuisson, where matters had proceeded from bad to worse. She locked up and ill-treated the monks who were sent to inquire into the scandals which prevailed, and her last feat in this kind was to imprison one M. Deruptis in a tower of the abbey, keep him on bread and water, and have him flogged every morning. It was determined, as she refused to vacate her office, to remove her by force and shut her up in the house of the "*Filles pénitentes*," though it was certainly not to this body that she belonged. The king's archers arrived on the 5th of February, 1618, and, being denied admittance, they scaled the walls, broke open the doors, and carried away Madame d'Estrées on her bed. On the 19th of February Mother Angélique left Port-Royal to supply her place. It was the day after the profession of her sister Anne, who remained unmoved while the rest of the nuns were weeping for the loss of their beloved abbess. The gloom which overcast a portion of the novitiate of sister Anne was passed, and she had entered into that joy at her calling, of which we have seen the evidence. "God," she said, when astonishment was expressed at her seeming indifference to the departure of Angélique—"God conferred too great a favor

upon me yesterday to permit me to mourn to-day."

The reception which Mother Angélique met with at Maubuisson was a complete contrast to the regrets she left behind. The report of the reform of Port-Royal had frightened the dissolute nuns, and they pictured to themselves a stern mistress whose very aspect would cause them to shudder. They had none of them the slightest idea of the duties of their profession. They attended the holy services without reverence, and spent all the remainder of their time in entertainments. They gave numerous parties, played comedies to divert their guests, had collations served in gardens where they had had summer-houses built, and often walked to the ponds on the road to Paris, where they were joined by monks who danced with them. The age was dissolute, and there was nothing of primitive innocence and simplicity in these rural amusements, which, even at the best, were a contravention of the rules of monastic discipline. The ignorance of the Maubuisson nuns of everything which appertained to religion was hardly credible. To confess is one of the first demands of the Roman Catholic church, the very alphabet of its faith; and people whose lives were supposed to be passed in pious exercises knew not how to discharge a duty which was performed by the meanest peasant.

"They presented themselves for the purpose to a Bernardin monk who did not bear the name of their confessor for nothing, since it was he who always made their confession for them, and named the sins that they were to acknowledge, although perhaps they had not committed them. It was all that he could do to get them to pronounce a 'Yes,' or a 'No,' upon which he gave them absolution without further inquiry. At last, wearied with the incessant reproaches of this father, on account of their ignorance, they hit on what they thought an excellent method. They composed in conjunction, with much difficulty, three kinds of confessions—one for high festivals, one for Sundays, and one for working-days, and, having written them in a book, each took it when they went to confess, which they might just as easily have done all together, since they all repeated the same thing."

Mother Angélique did not underrate the difficulties of her task. She believed that she was sacrificing herself to others, and that her health and energies would be exhausted in the task. She took with her her young sister Marie-Claire, "and

before setting out," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "she showed her the bed she would one day have to occupy in the infirmary of Port-Poyal on her return from this rude and ruinous campaign, as a general might point out the *Invalides* to his soldiers on the eve of a battle." The Abbess began by endeavoring to win the coöperation of the old nuns whom she had known in her childhood. Her gentle manners diminished by degrees the fright which her arrival had caused, and at last terror was changed into admiration. She next, to infuse a better spirit into the house, introduced thirty new nuns of tried piety, lodged them in a separate quarter, and bestowed all her care upon their training. As in Port-Royal, she was the first to perform the tasks she imposed. She swept the house, carried the wood, washed the porringers, and weeded the garden. Her cell was the narrowest, darkest, and most uncomfortable in the house; a sewer near the window rendered it unwholesome; insects made it a place of torture; and, to complete the self-imposed hardship, she slept in serge sheets upon a straw mattress which was placed on the ground.

Maubuisson was destined, like Port-Royal, to have its "day of the wicket," but the contest was of another kind. Madame d'Estrées had been violently ejected by the King's archers, and she resolved to copy the tactics of her enemies. She had escaped from the house of the *Filles pénitentes* in the night, and appeared suddenly at Maubuisson, accompanied by the Count de Sanzai and an armed escort. She went up to Mother Angélique as she was entering the choir, and, addressing her, said: "I have come to thank you for the care you have taken of my abbey during my absence, and to request you to return to yours, and leave me to manage my own." "Madame," replied Mother Angélique, "I would do it gladly if I could, but you know that our superior has ordered me to take charge of this house, and that having come here from obedience it is only from the same obedience that I can depart." Having said these words, she sat down in the choir in the seat of the Abbess. "What audacity!" exclaimed Madame d'Estrées, "to assume my place in my presence!" and rushing out she demanded the keys of the house. She was answered that they were in the possession of "Madame." "Is there any other *Madame* here but myself?" she cried out in

a rage. The storm soon ceased for a while, but was renewed when Mother Angélique and her nuns returned after dinner to the chapel. Count Sanzai and four gentlemen advanced towards her, sword in hand, and exhorted her to yield. One of them, to terrify her, fired a pistol. She still replied with calmness that she would not stir until she was turned out by force, since this alone could justify her before God. The nuns thronged round her to protect her, while Madame d'Estrées poured upon her a torrent of abuse, and at last took hold of her veil as if to tear it from her head. "Immediately," she says, "my lamb-like sisters became lions, and one of them advanced towards Madame d'Estrées, and exclaimed, 'You wretch! do you dare to pull away the veil of Madame de Port-Royal? Ah! I know you well. I know who you are.'" And upon this she caught hold of the veil of Madame d'Estrées and flung it away. The gentlemen now seized Mother Angélique by the arm, and hurried her into a coach which was waiting for the purpose. The nuns rushed in a crowd to the carriage; some ascended the box, some got up behind, or on the roof, and others clung to the wheels. "Drive on," said Madame d'Estrées to the coachman, but he answered that he dare not, for he should kill the nuns. Mother Angélique alighted, formed them into a procession, and two-and-two they walked to Pontoise. The plague was in the place, but the people thronged about them, exclaiming "that they had left the real plague behind in the person of that infamous and abandoned woman who had turned them out." Their sojourn at Pontoise was short. At the first outbreak Madame Angélique sent to Paris to announce what was going on. A troop of the king's archers were immediately dispatched, and Madame d'Estrées and her bravos fled at their approach without waiting to dispute the field. At ten at night, Madame Angélique and her nuns set out from Pontoise, escorted by a hundred and fifty archers, each carrying a torch in his hand and a musket on his shoulder. It is evident that exciting episodes like these would only increase the sense which the community might before have entertained of the importance of their mission, and would give an impulse as marked as it was unexpected to the efforts of Mother Angélique.

The danger from the myrmidons of Madame d'Estrées did not entirely cease

with this memorable day. They sometimes appeared at the convent, and fired under the windows. A garrison of fifty archers was ordered to watch over the safety of the inmates, but Mother Angélique refused to retain them. Her religious faith was equal to all emergencies, and that calm and enduring heroism, essentially feminine, which she displayed before the drawn swords of the brutal creatures of the infuriated ex-abbess, was the only shield she desired against a renewal of the outrage. She continued for five years her work of reform, and was offered the appointment of abbess, but refused to accept so rich a post. Madame de Soissons was named to the office, and Mother Angélique remained some months to assist her. Disagreements, however, arose, and one of the complaints was that she had filled the monastery with poor girls without dowry. "I answered," she said, "that if a house with thirty thousand livres rent was too much burthened by thirty nuns, I should not consider that Port-Royal, which had only six thousand, would be incommoded by receiving them." She accordingly removed them there the 3d of March, 1623. The Port-Royal nuns chanted the *Te Deum* on the arrival of their sisters from Maubuisson, "welcoming them as a present from God to enrich the house more and more with the inexhaustible treasury of poverty." Mother Angélique, who had business in Paris, was unable to accompany the adopted thirty to their new home; and fearing that the sudden influx of such numbers, when she was not there to keep order, would occasion an inroad on the strictness of the rules, she commanded them not to utter a syllable till her return. Each had a label on her sleeve, upon which was written her name, for the guidance of the officials of Port-Royal. It was not till the 12th of March that Mother Angélique returned, and unlocked the tongues of her thirty nuns. They had already been trained to preserve frequent silence, and, above all, to a general unquestioning obedience. A novice, on proceeding to the cell which had been allotted to her, and which was supposed to be furnished, found nothing but faggots. She accepted the accommodation without one word of inquiry, and slept on the faggots for several consecutive nights. On another occasion, some medicine was carried by mistake to a nun who was in perfect health. That it was brought to

her was sufficient, and she immediately swallowed it. The excesses of a system, if they lead to nothing worse, at least result in the ridiculous.

The Abbé de Saint-Cyran was intimate with M. Arnauld d'Andilly, the eldest brother of Mother Angélique. He happened to be present when she sent to ask for carriages to take the poor nuns of Maubuisson to Port-Royal, and he was so deeply impressed with the disinterestedness of the transaction that he wrote the abbess a letter of congratulation. Such was the commencement of her connection with this remarkable man, who exercised so large an influence over the present fortunes and future fate of Port-Royal. Richelieu, who appreciated his talents and feared his worth, made great efforts to attach him to himself. He offered him several sees, and the persevering refusal of Saint-Cyran to accept the bribe was the principal cause of the persecution to which he was afterwards subjected. "The narrow way," he once observed, "obliged me to marry a prison in preference to a bishopric, because the refusal of one led necessarily to the other, under a government that could tolerate only slaves." "Richelieu," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "like Bonaparte and all despots, could never bear that a person of any consideration should remain beyond the sphere of his power. He did not scorn to make advances, but woe to those who did not yield to them! Whoever was not for him, and wholly his, was soon deemed to be against him." In truth, the aims of Saint-Cyran and Richelieu were as remote as ambition and humility, as state-craft and simplicity, as worldliness and Christianity. While the Cardinal was intent upon wielding the sceptre of kings, the Abbé was engrossed with dreams of reforming the Church. "Formerly," said he, "it was like a large river, of which the waters were clear, but now it seems nothing but mire." The evil was notorious, and was bewailed by every man who had the slightest pretension to goodness. "My daughter," said St. François de Sales to Mother Angélique, "to talk of such disorders to the world would give rise to useless scandal. These sick people love their diseases; they do not choose to be cured. I know this as well as the doctors who speak of it, but discretion prevents me from mentioning it. We must weep and pray in secret to God, that his hand may be laid where men are

not qualified to set theirs." The man who uttered these expressions cannot certainly be taxed with an over-scrupulosity, for he believed that he would be justified in cheating at cards for the purpose of increasing his alms! It was the same in Italy as in France. "Zeal and affliction for the disorders of the Court of Rome," said Frederico Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, "incited me to write a book on the subject three fingers thick. But, having seen every avenue closed against reformation, I burnt my work, well assured that these moral truths did but cause scandal, and proclaim the excesses of those who refuse to mend." The whole soul of M. Saint-Cyran was up in arms against the spirit of an age like this. The world, the flesh, and the devil were in the Church, and, while Richelieu was in league with them, the business of the abbé was to fight against them to the death.

Before the acquaintance of Mother Angélique with M. Saint-Cyran had ripened into intimacy, some disastrous changes took place in the Port-Royal community. "This house, so inconvenient and so small," wrote one of their number, in allusion to the influx of nuns from Maubuisson, "became suddenly enlarged by the ample charity of those who desired to be straightened for the advantage of others." The sentiment was admirable, but the walls did not expand with their hearts, and they felt the annoyance of being crowded too closely in their hive. The marshy valley, too, generated fevers, and fifteen of their number had died in two years. They consequently purchased a house in Paris, and thither the colony was transferred in 1626.

The Mother Angélique, who had long been desirous of resigning her post of abbess, petitioned the King, about the period of the change of residence, to allow the nuns to choose their own superior. The prayer was granted, and a triennial election was substituted for the appointment for life by the Crown. A short time before she abdicated her own authority, she became acquainted with M. Zamet, bishop of Langres, and gave him the directorship of Port-Royal. If M. Zamet had been a M. Saint-Cyran, his fervor and wisdom would have supplied the place of the watchful piety of Mother Angélique, and rendered her resignation innocuous. But she was deceived in her man. Cautious as she was, she had mistaken the

character of this wily bishop, who was of Italian descent—

"For oft, though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps
At Wisdom's gate, and to Simplicity
Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems."

Through the new abbess he began with all speed to undo the work which Mother Angélique, with endless toil and prayer, had labored so many years to effect. In lieu of the customary plain fare served up on stoneware, they had now delicate viands on enamelled china. The dresses of the nuns were of beautiful white shalloon, their scapularies of brilliant scarlet, and perfumes, fine linen, and nosegays, were employed to give an air of luxury to the chapel. In short, M. Zamet avowed that he desired to introduce all the refinements which could please the young ladies of the Court, and allure rich and highborn maidens into the house. The discipline was relaxed to keep pace with these indulgences, and the nuns were encouraged to cultivate jesting, ridicule, and mimicry. It was evident that Port-Royal, under such influences, would soon relapse into the indolence and sensuality which experience shows to be the natural tendency of monastic institutions. Mother Angélique's heart was hot within her, but she held her tongue. "I often felt grieved," she says, "but I did not speak; and when I asked myself, What is the good of all this? I answered, To confound my own judgment." But though she forbore to remonstrate, her demeanor told what spirit she was of. "Your shadow is obnoxious to us," said M. Zamet to her one day. "Then send me where you please," was her reply. Her submission did not disarm his indignation, for he wanted her to be as worldly as himself; and since he could not subdue her goodness, he resolved to persecute it. The nuns were forbidden to talk to her, lest she should give them bad advice. On several occasions an account of her life, filled with calumnies, was read aloud in the refectory. She continued eating all the time, and on the Abbess expressing surprise at her composure, she replied, "I did not give it a thought." Once she was taken into the room with a large paper mask on her face, and the nuns who escorted her said, "Sisters, pray to God for this hypocrite; pray to God that she may be converted." Another day she

was ordered to rise from the table, a basket filled with dirt was tied round her neck, and as they led her round the room they exclaimed, "Sisters, behold this wretched creature, whose mind is more stuffed with perverse opinions than this basket is with filth." After acts like these, to walk barefooted and bareheaded was a trifling penance. The meekness with which she endured every insult that could be devised is the surest proof of the extraordinary worth of her character and the depth of her Christianity. In her reforms she appeared as a leader and a model; like a captain who goes in advance of his soldiers that he may conduct them to victory. Admiration, success, and obedience, were a full compensation for past self-denial, and the stimulus to new. But when she who lately ruled was mocked and reviled by her former pupils—when austerity only provoked contempt—when piety was branded as hypocrisy, and innocence as guilt—she had nothing to sustain her except the reality of a religion which was all-sufficient for itself. Of the many signal passages in the history of Mother Angélique this is the chief; the unflinching resolution of "the day of the wicket" fades before her un murmuring submission to protracted persecution.

There is little interest in the events which restored Mother Angélique to the favor of M. Zamet, and which, ultimately destroying his authority, placed the monastery under the direction of Saint-Cyran. We pass at once to the year 1637, which was marked by an event that produced a new appendage to Port-Royal, and was a fresh source of distinction to it. The nephew of Mother Angélique, Antoine Le Maître, was the most eloquent advocate who had been heard at the bar in the memory of man. "The days on which he pleaded," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "the preachers, out of prudence, and for fear of speaking in a desert, left their pulpits to go and hear him. The Great Hall was too small to contain his audience." These famous speeches were published after the revision of the orator himself. M. Sainte-Beuve confesses that they do not vindicate the admiration of his contemporaries. They are filled with quotations from poets, historians, and fathers of the Church. The ancient mythology is freely introduced, and Mars and Neptune are cited in the case of a servant-girl seduced by a locksmith. It was the age of pedantry, and

all antiquity was ransacked for precedents and allusions. An advocate once talked of the Trojan war and Scamander. "I beg to remind the Court," said the counsel on the opposite side, "that the name of my client is not *Scamander* but *Michaut*." In the time of Le Maître the Scamander would have been thought a rhetorical ornament, and such frigid interpolations were the admiration, however little they may have moved the feelings, of the auditors. The pious mother of the great advocate dreaded his fame, and thought it a snare of Satan to inflame his pride. She prayed fervently that the danger might be averted; and the request was heard. His aunt, the wife of that M. d'Andilly who inveighed so frantically against Mother Angélique on "the day of the wicket," fell mortally ill in August, 1637. M. Saint-Cyran attended her on her death-bed, and M. Le Maître heard the words he addressed to the dying penitent. As the prayer for the flitting spirit was read—"Depart, Christian soul, from this world in the name of the Almighty God which has created you,"—the young advocate thought of the terrible day when this tremendous order should be pronounced over him. The sudden impression did not pass away. He determined to abjure the bar, and went to impart his resolution to Saint-Cyran. "I foresee," replied the holy man, "whither God is conducting me in intrusting me with your salvation: but no matter; we must follow him, even to prison and to death." The Port-Royalist historians explain the allusion. "Cardinal Richelieu could not endure that persons on whom he had views should quit the world and escape from his hands, so exclusively did he consider them as his property and his creatures;" to which M. Sainte-Beuve subjoins, "And what indeed would Bonaparte have said if a Saint-Cyran had converted and carried off from him one of his marshals? He likewise would have had a Vincennes for the converter."

It was settled that M. Le Maître should continue to plead till the arrival of the vacation enabled him to withdraw less obtrusively than in full term. But his mind was no longer in his profession, and his addresses diminished in power. Mortified by the disparaging comments of a rival advocate, he summoned up all his energies to render his last speech worthy of his reputation, and he succeeded to his desire.

He believed he had renounced in his heart, as he was about to renounce in fact, the pomps and vanities of the world, but he could not endure that his fame as an orator should suffer an eclipse, and he did homage to the glory he thought he despised at the very moment of abjuring it.

He had a brother, M. de Séricourt, who was in the army, and who visited him in his retreat. "Will you, who appear so surprised to see me in this condition," said M. Le Maître in greeting him, "do me the same honor as some in the world who report and believe that I am mad?" "No," replied M. de Séricourt, "from the moment that I heard the news at the army I wished often I could imitate you. I came here more than half conquered, and this finishes me." Nor did the results stop here; a third brother, M. de Saci, entered into orders and became confessor at Port-Royal. It is a singular instance of the rigid pride which mingled in the domestic relations of those days that the Le Maître who voluntarily renounced the fairest prospects of worldly ambition, and was content to bury himself in a secluded oblivion, underwent the severest conflicts of soul before he could bring himself to accept M. de Saci for a confessor. The eldest son could not serve the younger. He could exchange distinction for insignificance, but his pride revolted at the notion that he, the first-born, should show any symptom of obedience to his brother. He at last, at the instance of his ecclesiastical superiors, vanquished his scruples, and he wrote to M. de Saci to tell him that he entirely resigned to him his heart.

The recluses at first were lodged in a building contiguous to Port-Royal of Paris, which was run up for the purpose. The persecutions which were commenced soon after caused them to retire to the original Port-Royal in the Fields, from which they were driven in turn. But they finally settled there, and it is there that M. Sainte-Beuve exhibits to us the eloquent ex-advocate performing the functions of a day-laborer, "digging, reaping corn, making hay in the heat of noontide, wiping away the perspiration in summer, his beads in his hand, and refusing a fire in the hardest of winters; then plunging deep into study on his return from manual labor, devouring Hebrew that he might penetrate into the hidden meaning of Scripture, examining all the

doctrine of the fathers, translating them, compiling little treatises, composing learned biographies, and collecting materials for the writings of M. Arnauld his uncle." He once resumed his ancient functions, and pleaded for the nuns of Port-Royal before a village magistrate who had never heard anything so beautiful. He loved to teach the pupils at the schools, and it was still the master of eloquence which spoke in his lessons. "He read to me and made me read," says Du Fossé, "different passages of the poets and orators, and pointed out to me their beauties both of sense and elocution. He taught me also how to pronounce both poetry and prose, which he did admirably himself, having a charming voice and every other quality of a great orator." But what more than all shows how his affections lingered over the profession he had renounced, and with what fond recollections he reverted to the arena of his triumphs, is that, having detected the genius of young Racine, he wanted to make him an advocate!

The forebodings of Saint-Cyran were not long in being realized. On the 14th of May, 1638, he was arrested and conducted to Vincennes. M. d'Andilly met him as he was carried guarded in a coach, and, not guessing what had happened, said to M. Saint-Cyran, "Where are you taking all these people?" "Oh!" said M. Saint-Cyran, "they are taking me." The exact cause of his imprisonment was never declared. He himself enumerated seventeen reasons for it, but tyranny does not want seventeen reasons for persecuting virtue. The papers containing the vast labors of his studious life were seized and carried away. Two or three volumes escaped the search, and they were burnt by his nephew, M. de Barcos, for fear they should furnish materials for an accusation. They were the memoranda for a gigantic work on the Sacrament. "The thoughts," said M. de Barcos, "are not lost, for they have returned to their source." M. Saint-Cyran did not regard their destruction with equal complacency. "If," said he, "a man has amassed by the pious studies of years those riches of the divine word which are infinitely more precious to him than pearls and diamonds, and which he loved as having been given to him by the hand of God, and if this man consents that God destroys them by an unexpected accident, it is an excellent preparation to lead such a person to the voluntary abne-

gation of himself." In effect it was to acknowledge that if he could resign himself to the destruction of his theological labors he could resign himself to anything. Of all the losses of property none would seem so disheartening as to lose the proceeds of protracted mental toil, and it is surprising with what patience these trials have usually been borne, and with what fortitude and resolution they have been repaired. The resignation of Fénelon surpassed that of Saint-Cyran himself. His papers were consumed in a fire which burnt down the palace of Cambrai. The Abbé de Langeron hastened to Versailles to inform him of the disaster. He found him quietly conversing with some friends, and the Abbé endeavored to break the news by degrees. "I know it," interrupted the Archbishop; "but it is better that my house should be destroyed than the cottage of a poor man;" and he tranquilly resumed the former conversation. When Cooper, the author of the Latin Dictionary, had been employed eight years upon his work, his wife, who was a shrew, put it on the fire. The indomitable lexicographer commenced it anew, and in eight years more completed his task. Porson spent ten months of incessant toil in copying in his beautiful hand the almost obliterated manuscript of the Lexicon of Photius. When the copy was burnt he sat down unruffled to make a second, which he completed in the same perfect style as the first. Audubon likewise, the American ornithologist, had one thousand of the drawings for his great work on birds destroyed by fire. "The burning heat," he says, "which rushed through my brain when I saw my loss, was so great that I could not sleep for several nights, and my days were oblivion; but I took up my gun, note-book, and pencils, and went forth to the woods again as gaily as if nothing had happened. I could make better drawings than before. In three years my portfolio was filled." All authors, however, have not displayed the same self-command. A fire consumed the observatory and manuscripts of Hevelius, and such was his regret at the destruction of some astronomical notes that he wrote eight years afterwards that he never thought of it without shedding tears. Father Simon, the author of the well-known "Critical Histories of the Old and New Testament," was denounced by the Jesuits to the Intendant of Rouen, and,

fearing that his manuscripts would form the ground of a charge against him, in the first impulse of alarm he committed them to the flames. No sooner was it done than his regret brought on a violent fever which killed him in three days. An accidental fire destroyed a work of Urcæus, which he had just completed. Pouring forth a torrent of abuse on the Virgin and the saints, he rushed into a wood, where he spent the day in a continuous delirium. He passed the night on a dunghill, and next morning took refuge in the cottage of a poor joiner, and remained with him six months, renouncing alike the companionship of his books and his friends. What an effectual antidote it would have been to his grief if he could have rated his works at the same value as they were rated by the world! But the best consolation was that which awaited Thomas Gale, the learned author of the "Court of the Gentiles." The great fire of London burnt the house of the friend who had care of the manuscript. Gale had scarcely subdued his mind to resignation when his friend came to tell him that the manuscript was saved.

The male recluses who lived within the precincts of the monastery of Port-Royal at Paris were ordered to leave on the arrest of Saint-Cyran. It was then they took refuge at the old *Port-Royal-des-Champs*, which had been now twelve years uninhabited, and was going to decay. The cells within were damper than ever, the grounds without more marshy, the surrounding woods more dense and gloomy. The enemies of Saint-Cyran grudged his disciples even this retreat, where they were cut off from all possibility of working mischief, and where malaria promised to deal more rigorously with them than tyranny itself. One M. Laubardemont, of infamous memory, was sent to interrogate them, that he might extract some evidence against M. Saint-Cyran. "The examination of M. Le Maître in particular," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "excites at once laughter and disgust. It is folly, but wicked and cruel folly, and it is just that it should tarnish the grandeur of Richelieu." Among many other puerile questions, Le Maître was asked if he had not had visions. "Yes, certainly," he replied; "when I open one of the windows of my chamber I see the village of Vanmurier, and when I open the other I see the village of Saint-Lambert. These are

all my visions." The ex-advocate was in his element here, and he triumphed as easily over M. Laubardemont, when performing the office of Inquisitor, as he would have done if of old he had been pitted against him in the courts. The recluses, driven from their solitude, took lodgings in Paris; but in the summer of 1639 they went back secretly to *Port-Royal-des-Champs*.

The Prince of Condé interceded for M. Saint-Cyran with Richelieu, and the Cardinal replied, "Do you know for what kind of man you are pleading? He is more dangerous than six armies." Hope of mercy there was none; and it was not till the death of Richelieu, five years afterwards, that M. Saint-Cyran was released from his confinement, the 6th of February, 1643. "All Vincennes," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "was in transports; the monks of the place came to congratulate him, and the guards wept with joy and sadness to see him depart." Mother Agnes was the first who heard the news, when the community were assembled in the refectory, which was a period of the day devoted to silence. Not choosing, even on such an occasion as this, to infringe the laws of the house, she unfasted her girdle to intimate that the bonds of their beloved director was broken. The sign was instantly understood. Every face beamed with gladness, and in the midst of their silence the nuns spoke a language more expressive than words.

The health of M. Saint-Cyran was undermined by his long imprisonment, and he died in the October of the year that witnessed his release. He bequeathed his heart to M. d'Andilly on condition that he withdrew from the world; his bowels were claimed by Mother Angélique for Port-Royal of Paris; and his hands, "which had been so often raised to God, and which had written so many truths," were cut off for M. Le Maître. These ghastly relics of corruption, which are shocking to men of another faith, wear to the eyes of Roman Catholic superstition a hallowed appearance. But if the Port-Royalists honored his remains, they also endeavored to emulate his spirit, and at least in this instance did not substitute for saintship the worship of a fragment from the body of a saint.

Several ladies of rank were attracted by the piety of Port-Royal, and had occasional relations with it. Marie de Gonza-

gue, the future Queen of Poland, possessed an apartment there to which she frequently retired. In her high estate her counsellors exhorted her to save, but she answered that it was needless, for she would always have enough to be received into Port-Royal by her old friend Mother Angélique. "No, no," replied the Abbess, when these words were reported to her; "unless a queen is completely holy she causes a relaxation of the rules. Kings and queens are naught before God, and the vanity of their station rather excites his aversion than his love." There is not a little religious pride in this speech, which was unworthy of Mother Angélique. Another of the frequent visitants at Port-Royal was the Princess de Guemené, and above all the Marquise de Sablé, who built a house within the precincts of the monastery. There she led a placid and agreeable existence, receiving excellent company, and allowing herself a thousand dainties. Her retreat was an odd compound of *bel esprit*, devotion, politics, and confectionary. "Here is all my stock of maxims," La Rochefoucauld wrote to her; "but as people give nothing for nothing, I beg to have in return a carrot-soup and a mutton-stew." And again—"You cannot do me a greater charity than to allow the bearer of this note to enter into the mysteries of marmalade and of your genuine sweetmeats, and I most humbly entreat you to do all you can for him. If I could hope to receive two platefuls of those sugar-plums, of which I do not deserve to eat, I should feel myself indebted to you all my life long." How did Mother Angélique put up with these excellent carrot-soups, these exquisite stews, and these mysteries of marmalade? We are not informed; but her ardent wish to return to the beloved *Port-Royal-des-Champs* serves as an indication of her opinions. Paris, it is easy to perceive, marred her work, and she felt the necessity of a deeper retreat.

It was not till the 13th of May, 1648, that Mother Angélique and a portion of the nuns returned to Port-Royal in the Fields. The dilapidated mansion had been repaired, and the surrounding grounds, drained and cultivated by the exertions of the increasing band of recluses, were healthier than before. Mother Agnes asserted that the place inspired a devotion which was not felt elsewhere; and if, she said, the nuns of Paris, of whom

many preferred to remain in the city, had experienced the sensation, they would desire the wings of the dove, that they might fly there and be at rest. She seemed unconscious, like her sister Anne, that her feelings were derived from incidents associated with the locality, and not from the locality itself. It was here that conviction first dawned upon her mind when the fascination of novelty and the ardor of youth conspired to maintain her in a perpetual joyfulness. These were days never to be renewed, and the recollections of that glorious time haunted the scenes in which they were born, and impregnated every nook with the primitive spirit.

The war of the Fronde, at the commencement of 1649, gave for a while a new aspect to the monastery. The people of the neighborhood brought their movables to this sanctuary to preserve them from the ravages of the hostile armies. The courts were crammed with beasts and fowls till the scene reminded the nuns of Noah's ark. The church was closely packed with corn, peas, pots and pans, and all manner of miscellaneous effects. The dormitory was full of sick and wounded. Many of the peasants who took refuge at the monastery were crowded together with the animals to such a degree, that, except for the coldness of the weather, Mother Angélique was convinced that the plague would have broken out. Even the cold itself was an evil, for their wood was exhausted and they did not dare to stir abroad to cut more. Many of the people were starving in consequence of the general pillage, and they owed their lives to the charity dispensed at Port-Royal. But what, above all, gives a shocking idea of the wanton brutality of the soldiery, is, that the inoffensive inhabitants of the surrounding villages were obliged to forsake their houses and hide themselves in the woods to avoid being killed by their countrymen.

Such as we have seen Mother Angélique she always remained. We pass on to the year 1651 that we may get a glimpse of another remarkable woman, Jacqueline Pascal, who then entered the monastery. "Heaven," says M. Cousin, "had granted her, with the loveliness of a woman, all the gifts of genius. She was inferior to her brother Pascal neither in intellect nor in character." At the age of fourteen, she won the annual prize which was given at Rouen for the best poem on the Immacu-

late Conception. When her name was announced, Corneille rose on her behalf and thanked the President in verse. M. Cousin considers that the poem of Jacqueline surpasses that of the author of the "Cid," and it must be confessed that the woman who was the equal of Pascal and the superior of Corneille must have been one of the marvels of the world. But we cannot accept the estimate of M. Cousin, who is prone to exaggerate the merits of his heroines to a degree which we should not have expected from the rigorous precision of a metaphysician. Whether or not he has fallen in love with them, according to the theory of M. Sainte-Beuve, he certainly writes of them with the blindness of a lover. Jacqueline Pascal, in moral force of character, was not inferior to her celebrated brother, but she was no more his rival in intellect, if we are to judge from her writings, than she was a hundred feet high.

In 1646 her father fell upon the ice and broke his leg. Two brothers in the neighborhood, who, though they were not surgeons by profession, had acquired great skill in the setting of limbs, attended him on the occasion. They were as well versed in the Port-Royal divinity as in the treatment of fractures, and introduced the Pascals to the writings of Saint-Cyran, Jansenius, and Arnauld. In the autumn of 1647, Jacqueline accompanied her brother to Paris, and, having been strongly impressed by the treatises of the Port-Royalists, she was induced to go to their church. The sermons completed what the books had commenced, and she made up her mind to become a nun. She at last disclosed her desire to her father. He answered that his days would probably not be many, and he entreated her to have patience till he was in his grave. In the mean time he promised that she should live as she pleased. She thanked him, gave no direct reply to his request that she would not desert him, but said that he should not have reason to complain of her disobedience. It is seldom that good qualities are mixed together in the mind in their just proportions. Jacqueline's grand merit was the homage she paid to the conclusions of her conscience, and the inflexible resolution with which she acted upon her convictions. Her defect was to yield too much to her personal desires, and to give too little weight to the feelings of others. She was not by nature

deficient in domestic affection, but it was overborne by her conventual aspirations, and the intensity of her individual will. The touching appeal of her father deserved a warmer answer, and a more hearty compliance. In truth, in all her traits, Jacqueline was a complete personification of the virtues and errors of Port-Royal. Within its walls there was a bond of affection which rivalled in its strength the ties of nature, but the tone adopted to those without was hard and chilling. The fountain of love in the monastery itself was never dry, but the stream was not suffered to flow beyond.

In 1649 she went with her father to stay with her sister Madame Perier in Auvergne. She never left her room except at meals or to go to church, and if any one intruded on her privacy it was evident that the interruption was irksome to her. She passed the winter without a fire, and would never approach it when she came down to dinner. Her abstinence was so great that she destroyed her health, and when it seemed necessary, from her debility, to increase the allowance of food, her stomach was unable to bear it. The candles she consumed showed how little she slept, and it is surprising that exhausted nature did not sink under the discipline. The dress of the monastery was so trying to novices, that by fretting the body it acted injuriously on the mind. Jacqueline resolved to prepare herself beforehand for the change. She discarded her corset, cut her hair, and wore a head-dress which was larger and more troublesome than the veil. Prevented from entering the convent, she adopted the conventual life in her home. The moral courage this required was immense, for it was opposed to all which prevailed around her, and was certain to provoke incessant censure and ridicule. In Port-Royal it was the system, and everything there contributed to make it as easy as it was difficult in the world. But here again we come upon the errors and follies which mingled with her high resolves, and deprives them of much of their praise. It almost seemed as if the votaries of Port-Royal held pain to be piety, and comfort to be wickedness. They were not content to declare war against criminal sensuality; they thought that physical deprivation was an essential part of moral beauty. Jacqueline expressed a doubt whether dirt was the most

perfect state of man; but it was encouraged and practised by some in the monastery, and was quite as rational as many of their other observances. It would be difficult to say whether particular portions of their rules are most fantastic or revolting. In the dreary directions which Jacqueline drew up for the management of the children at Port-Royal, she states that in the brief periods of recreation each must play by herself to avoid making a noise! As if the noise of childish sports was a sin! They were strictly forbidden to caress each other, or to show marks of fondness, for nature was not to be directed, but extinguished. Good and bad, they confounded it all in a common anathema, and not content to root out the weeds from the heart, they converted it to a desert.

During the sojourn of Jacqueline with her sister, a monk employed her, as she had a turn for poetry, to translate some of the Latin hymns of the Church into vernacular verse. She imparted the project to her friends at Port-Royal, and they enjoined her to desist. They told her it was a talent of which God would not demand from her an account, and that humility and silence were the attributes of her sex. It was still the same delusion. They would not permit the use of gifts for fear they should be abused. The notion was at the root of the monastic system itself. They fled from the world they should have ameliorated and adorned, for fear the world should overcome them. It was not strength but weakness which drove them into retirement, and to preserve their individual health they ran from the infected, whom they should have remained to cure. When it was literally a physical malady instead of the moral plague with which they had to deal, they acted like true heroines. Jacqueline sat day and night for an entire fortnight by the bedside of a niece who had the confluent small-pox, and hardly left her for a moment. She had, however, passed through the disorder herself, which diminished very greatly the danger of infection.

In September, 1651, her father died. Being now her own mistress, she determined to gratify her cherished project without further delay, and enter Port-Royal. Her brother fondly hoped that she would defer her intention for a couple of years, and remain to soothe his grief and relieve his solitude. He was hurt

when he found she was bent upon leaving him, although she spoke of it at first as a temporary trial of the conventual life. She entered the monastery in January, 1652, when she was twenty-six years of age, and two months afterwards she wrote to her brother to declare her final resolution. "It is just," she said, "that others should do a little violence to their feelings to compensate me for what I have done for the last five years." To compensate her, that is, for not abandoning a loving father! Such was one side of the spirit of Port-Royal, often selfish in its seeming self-denial. When she sent word to her brother that she should take the veil on All Saints' day, he went to her nearly wild with the pain produced in his head by the announcement, and implored her to postpone the final step, that he might have time to get reconciled to the project. He could only obtain a fortnight's respite, which he rejected as useless. To have satisfied the affection, consoled the sorrow, participated in the thoughts, and cheered the home of Pascal, will not seem to healthy minds a less worthy and religious act than to have shut herself up in Port-Royal.

Irritated, perhaps, by the ungenerous obstinacy of his sister, Pascal availed himself of his legal rights to avoid putting the portion bequeathed her by her father into her power. This step threw her into an agony of distress which nearly cost her her life. Unable to endow the monastery with her inheritance, she must either forego the vocation which was the predominant passion of her soul, or submit to be received gratuitously, which was gall to the proud independence of her mind. To escape the alternative she desired to be admitted as one of the lay sisters who were the menials of the establishment, and in fact worked for their scanty board. But this request was refused. Mother Angélique and Mother Agnes thought the dowry a matter so indifferent that they gaily advised her to renounce the property and trouble her brother no more upon the subject; but M. Singlin, the director of Port-Royal, replied that, if some maintained their rights with too much warmth, others relinquished them with too much facility; that it was necessary always to stand neuter, and, regardless of interest on either side, to consider what was right; and that, if a person was disposed to be unjust to ourselves, charity to him obliged

us to endeavor to show him his error and bring him back to his duty. After delivering this wise counsel he yielded to the opposite opinion, and Jacqueline was instructed to write to Pascal and abandon her claim. She would have been inconsolable if he had taken her at her word; but when he found her resolution to assume the veil was unalterable, he paid her portion of his own accord with perfect good will. Thus ended Jacqueline's "day of the wicket." It was as much more trying to her fortitude than the grand conflict of Mother Angélique as it was inferior in dramatic interest and less justified by the circumstances. The Abbess had been compelled by her father himself to take the vows against her will, and having subscribed them she did but claim the right to keep inviolate the solemn obligations she had been forced to contract. Jacqueline, on the contrary, insisted on taking the veil against the wishes of her relations, and forsook a greater duty for a less. The result justified her obstinacy to the person whom it chiefly concerned, for Pascal himself was won by her example to follow her into seclusion, and outdid her in the observances of monastic austerity.

Later events displayed under a more favorable aspect the true grandeur of her character. The Jesuits, who hated Port-Royal because, being famous and influential, it was yet not Jesuit, procured at Rome the condemnation of five propositions which they professed having extracted from the "Augustinus" of Jansenius the friend of St. Cyran. A formulary, as it was called, founded on the bull of the pope, was drawn up in 1656, and ordered by the parliament in 1657 to be signed by all the ecclesiastics of the kingdom. The command slept till May, 1661, when it was determined to put it in force, and the nuns of Port-Royal—the very focus of Jansenism—were required to sign it. For some time previously this party was satisfied to draw a distinction between a question of fact and a question of doctrine. They admitted that the doctrine was false, and that the Pope was empowered to pronounce upon it, but they denied that it was to be found in the work of Jansenius. To satisfy the conscience of the Port-Royalists, a declaration was attached to the formulary, of which the substance, according to Jacqueline, was to

require simple silence as to the fact, and obedience to the bull as to the doctrine. The Jansenist divines consented to the compromise, but the inflexible Jacqueline repudiated it with indignation. She treated it as an evasion, and a cowardly relinquishment of the truth. To bind themselves to silence, and to leave their adversaries free to speak and to triumph, was for practical purposes to admit that the propositions were in Jansenius. This, she said, was consenting to a lie if it was not denying the truth, and she protested loudly against virtually signing a statement that a doctrine was in a book where they themselves had not seen it. Nor was she a whit more willing to give up Jansenius himself. While admitting that they were bound to obey the Holy See in matters of faith, she in reality rebelled against it, maintaining that the author and his doctrine were alike holy, and that they ought to defend them to death. Her position was a triple invasion of Roman Catholicism. Not only was it a *private* judgment, not only was it a *lay* judgment, but it was the judgment of a *woman*. She herself alluded to this objection. "I know it is not for women to defend the truth, although unhappily it may be said that, when the bishops have not the courage of women, the women ought to have the courage of bishops. But if we are not to defend the truth we can at least die for it, and suffer all things rather than abandon it." That the ministers to whom God had confided his Gospel, should be so unfaithful to it pierced her, she said, to the heart. "What is it," she exclaimed, "we fear? Banishment and dispersion, loss of property—if you will, imprisonment and death; but is not this our glory, and ought it not to be our joy?" Her letter, full of such indignant expostulations as these, she, a simple woman trained up in the obedience of the Roman Catholic system, had the courage to send to the great Doctor of her church and party, Antoine Arnauld, who had agreed to adopt the declaration, and was believed to have been concerned in drawing it up. She did not dispute his creed, for it was the same with her own. It was his betrayal of the belief he held, the duplicity, the cowardice, which she denounced, and, by the boldness with which she upbraided him, showed him how to be daring in a righteous cause. She declared that if the compromising conduct continued, the agitation would kill her; and kill

her it did. She expired on the 4th of October, 1661, a martyr to her lofty sense of moral rectitude, and the disgrace of shrinking, at the dictation of power, from the avowal of truth. The Mother Angélique had gone to her reward in the preceding August. On her death-bed she checked a nun who was taking down her words. She was answered that the dying remarks of a preceding abbess had been of considerable use. "Ah!" she said, "that dear mother was very humble and very simple-minded, but I am neither." Doubtless she had had her hours of pride, for she had accomplished mighty things, and could not look round upon her holy flock, and the celebrated men who had gathered round her house, or mark her influence over the minds of others, and the impulse which her example had given to piety throughout France, and not be tempted to feel some complacency at the contemplation of her work; but if a momentary vanity ever intruded, it was quickly expelled, and she was as truly humble as she was good. Not only as the reformer of her convert does she occupy the chief place among its celebrities, but she appears to have been really the most remarkable, as was testified by her associates and successors when they proudly called her the "*Great Mother Angélique*."

It would be doing these holy women a grievous injustice, and would entirely destroy the value of their example, to suppose that they were actuated by the hope of that fame which has eventually fallen to them. It was the hatred which Port-Royal excited, the opposition it provoked, the injustice it suffered, which raised it to the place which it occupies in the eye of the world, and, far from presenting a field for ambition, its insignificant endowments, its homely buildings, and its secluded position, seemed to doom it to

perpetual obscurity. The decisive part of the life of Mother Angélique was passed in an arduous struggle with lukewarmness, laxity, or vice, and she could have no notion that her steady devotedness and gentle wisdom would ever be heard of beyond the walls of the convent which they adorned. The incidents of her career which most attract the reader were, after all, but brief episodes in her humble, unobtrusive existence, and were done in a corner and not in the market-place. The "day of the wicket" was a domestic scene which subsequent events alone caused to be recorded; and if anything could have added to the grief which the Abbess felt in that memorable conflict, it would have been the knowledge that the particulars would one day be published to the world. The noble remonstrance of Jacqueline Pascal against the covert surrender of the most cherished principles of the Port-Royal community was contained in a private letter which was never intended to see the light, and would doubtless have passed into oblivion except for the splendor of her brother's reputation, which, like a sun, illumined every object within its system. The conflicts of mind which killed her were on behalf of views which were discountenanced by the great names of her sect, and she undoubtedly must have supposed that her sorrows and remonstrances would be buried with her in the tomb. Even as it is, the names of Mother Angélique and Jacqueline Pascal have waited two centuries for the honor which, however little it was desired, was so eminently their due. It was in the party of the Jansenists that Roman Catholicism made its nearest approach to the Protestant creed, and rarely indeed have any adherents of the Papal church shone forth with such a pure and steady light as the Nuns of Port-Royal.

THE SACRE CŒUR.

A RECENT magazine article entitled "School Days at the Sacred Heart" (and which describes convent life as it exists now at Manhattanville) carries me back to my girlish days in the mother establishment in Paris, long before a single convent of that order existed on this side of the Atlantic.

Thirty years ago Americans did not cross the ocean to spend the summer in Baden, or the winter in Rome, with the same facility they do now; the voyage was made in packet-ships, varying in time of transit from three to four weeks; comparatively few families travelled abroad, and still fewer placed their children in foreign educational establishments. Upon leaving this country it had been originally intended to send me to a French Protestant school in the vicinity of Paris; but the lady having suddenly died, my foreign relatives decided upon the *Sacré Cœur* as the most eligible substitute, and one bright spring day I was conducted across the river, through the old streets of the Faubourg St. Germain, until we arrived at the gates of the hotel in the rue de Varenne owned and occupied by the ladies of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

To a girl barely in her teens, educated in the Congregational Church, in one of the strictest of New England boarding-schools, taught from early childhood to look upon the Roman Catholic Church as the scarlet woman of the Revelation, the change was something miraculous. The soft-voiced, soft-walking nuns, the lofty *salons* of the convent, still showing remains of the gilding which had lavishly decorated them when the Hôtel de Brion had been filled with the fair women and brave men of the court of Henry IV., spoke volumes to the imagination. The walls were now all plain white, although rumor whispered that charming paintings were hidden in the panels beneath. All was strange, and when I found myself in the school-rooms and heard on every side the old historic names which were so familiar to me through my studies, I could scarcely realize my own identity. Blanche de Montmorenci, Edith de Courcy, Isabeau de Beauvau, and dozens of others of the same kind, were heard on every side.

There were assembled nearly two hundred young girls, varying in age from seven to eighteen, and representing nearly all the noble houses in France, to say nothing of several members of the Scotch and Irish nobility, and three Protestants—two Americans and the third an English girl of rank. The French language had been familiar to me from childhood; consequently that was no barrier to my intercourse with either the ladies or my schoolmates. We were shortly summoned to the refectory to dinner, and as it happened to be a half-holiday, we were allowed after finishing our repast to go at once into the superb park or garden, which extended from the rear of the house to the adjacent parallel street, and seemed to cover several acres, forming an enclosure where we could wander for hours, although each class was always accompanied by one of the ladies, who exercised a general supervision. At the extremity of the park was a large poultry yard, and at intervals through the lower part of the grounds were dwarf fruit trees on espaliers.

I naturally gravitated toward the two Americans, who were Philadelphians and sisters. They pointed out to me various notabilities among our companions, one of whom was a daughter of Dom Pedro of Brazil, another of Godoy, the famous, or rather infamous, Prince of the Peace. All were dressed very nearly alike in a sort of uniform, but several of the girls wore broad blue and green ribbons fringed with silver, passed over one shoulder and knotted at the side, and my new friends informed me that they were "the Children of Mary" and "Angels," honorary distinctions for good conduct, and they showed me two lovely little temples in the grounds belonging to their respective societies.

Later in the afternoon I was initiated into my first experience of the service of the Romish Church; and the beautiful chapel, the nuns in their carved stalls, the flowers, incense, and all the accessories, familiar to most of my readers, impressed me immeasurably, all the more from my preconceived ideas of something horrible and mystic. It took me a few days to become habituated to the routine of conventual life, and more than once I was awakened by the sprinkling of holy water in my face, a method used for calling the laggards who had slept too heavily to hear the bell, which, like all the other influences around us, was low-toned and gentle.

The girls were very much like all other school girls, with the exception that there seemed to be no unruly ones. There were no day scholars admitted, consequently no outside influence, except at stated intervals, when the relatives of the children were permitted to visit them. Each girl had her favorite nun, and each her favorite saint, for whom she professed a special *culte*. I attached myself to one of the ladies, to whom I was drawn most powerfully from the first time I saw her. She belonged to one of the oldest families in Brittany, and was a near relative of the lady who followed the Duchesse de Berri in her adventurous and romantic expedition in the Vendée. My nun was about twenty-seven, with beautiful dark eyes and a lovely expression; and I, who thought every nun must have her story, as many of them had, often attempted to discover hers. One of the ladies was married to an army officer who was reported killed at some foreign post; she took the vows. After she had taken the black veil her husband, who had escaped unheard-of dangers, returned to find his wife lost to him; in despair, he at once took the monastic vow, and they never met again. I used to study her face for hours to try and read regret written there, but all seemed holy resignation. Our life was a very happy one, and we had many holidays, mostly religious *fêtes*. We used sometimes to be driven to Conflans, which had formerly been a country seat of the Archbishop of Paris. This same Archbishop, Monseigneur de Quelen, whose palace had been destroyed by the mob in 1830, had apartments on one-half of the court in our "hotel" (which was immense), and he often said mass for us and sometimes assisted at our little religious *fêtes*. He was one of the handsomest men who ever wore the episcopal robes, and whenever he chanced to meet any of us in the grounds he was always so kind and indulgent that we almost worshipped him. The discipline of the school was admirable; the punishments few; moral suasion was the great instrument; our consciences were educated to a high point of sensitiveness. We generally told ourselves of any fault which had evaded the ladies' eyes. I remember, for instance, one English girl who was at the head of her class in history, a great achievement for a foreigner in a foreign language. She had repeated her lesson perfectly; one date escaped her memory, and as she sat next the teacher her eye glanced for a moment at the open book; she caught the date and came out from her lesson still at the head of her class; but her conscience smote her;

she could not sleep, and before the class assembled the next morning she had gone to the mistress and confessed her fault; and although it was of course known to all the girls at the lesson, she seemed much happier than the day before when in the place of honor. One mischievous foreigner, who invariably, whenever she could obtain the chance, would drum a few bars of the "Marseillaise" on the piano for the fun of witnessing the consternation it created, was stopped by being asked if she would continue to play it when she knew the pain it caused our Superior, Madame de Gramont, whose father was conducted to the guillotine to the music of that air. Of course the offence was never repeated, and another point of interest was added to our gentle, lady-like Superior, whom we seldom saw, the *Maîtresse Générale*, a woman of great character, and literary ability recognized outside of the convent walls, being the more direct head so far as the school was concerned. Sometimes we had a visit from the venerable Madame Barras, the foundress of the order, who lived to see ramifications of it in every part of the globe. One of the ladies, a Russian princess of a well-known family, was always painting religious pictures for the different chapels of the order; and it was my delight to sit by her easel out of school hours, and hear her relate, sometimes the legend of the saint whom she was painting, at others the struggles she had with her family when she wished to become a Romanist. To me there seemed so little difference between the Greek and Romish churches that I could not understand the rancor and anger she narrated to me. Of course the whole tone of the convent was intensely Legitimist. Henry the Fifth's birthday was always celebrated, but, fortunately, it fell on Michaelmas day, so the extra service was not politically obnoxious. In summer, our great *fête* was the 15th of August, the Assumption of the Virgin, and it was a beautiful sight to watch the procession as it wound through the grand old trees in the park to the chapel of "the Children of Mary." The black robes of the nuns, the white dresses and veils (always worn on religious festivals) of the girls, each one bearing a lighted taper, all the clear young voices chanting the Ave Maria, the incense waving, the Archbishop in gorgeous robes, with his attendant priests, leading the procession, followed by young girls bearing white silk banners with the cipher and attributes of the Virgin embroidered thereon, and four of the youngest children carrying bouquets of white flowers almost as large as themselves! It was like enchantment! What a change from fast day and Thanksgiving, which were the only holidays in my New England experience!

And then, during the summer vacation, when not more than thirty or forty of the scholars remained, how we enjoyed it! One of our amusements was to go down to a large kitchen, where all was prepared for us—a long table in the centre of the great room, with piles of dough pastry ready to be moulded into shape, and great dishes of different kinds of jam. Here, with white aprons tied around our waists, we undertook to prepare little patties of every conceivable device and form. Two lay sisters stood by an immense oven, ready heated, and with large shovels put in the dough and drew out the patties. Never since did the most luscious preparations of *Carême* or *Félix* taste like these productions! and they were good, undoubtedly; for conventual pastry and sweets have long been proverbial for their excellence, and the most we could do to spoil them would have been to make the paste heavy by handling. How proud we were, too, when our favorite nun, for whom the largest and most ornate was always reserved, complimented us upon its design or flavor. Another amusement was to play "cache-cache," or hide-and-seek, in the vaults of the convent, the girls being divided into two parties, each conducted by one of the ladies. How our voices resounded in

these subterranean, vaulted walls ! and we took very good care not to lag behind, afraid of "we knew not what." The ladies had none of that asceticism one would imagine, but were to all appearance as happy as possible, and entered into all our games with as much zest as any worldly mistress could have done ; and I think, as a whole, I have never seen an assemblage of more highly cultivated women, or of more elegant and aristocratic bearing. True, nearly all had been in the world and of the world before taking their vows, and, so far as I could see, none seemed to regret it. After the girls returned for the winter term, school continued as before ; but we had weekly lectures from the Grand Vicar of St. Geneviève, and occasionally a discourse from some distinguished foreign priest passing through Paris. I remember listening with interest and astonishment, but I cannot say conviction, to an Englishman of high rank who had renounced wealth, position, and all their advantages, to become a priest, and expatiated to us upon the superiority of a life free from care, reposing with perfect confidence in the bosom of the *true* Church, and ordered by her in all things. I, worldly heretic that I was, used to often look askance at the enclosure railed off by the side of the high altar, where the great ladies of *the* Faubourg often stole an hour from the world to spend at their devotions ; and I used to speculate if, after I had enjoyed all the world had to give, I should be satisfied to be like the silent figures in the stalls by my side, who were permitted no expression of affection to any earthly being ; for every mark of it on our side toward them was instantly suppressed, and if any of the ladies became too popular in the school, she was at once removed to another of the numerous establishments of the Sacred Heart. Christmas was also a great holiday, and for weeks before, the different religious societies were busy preparing "crèches," or miniature representations of the stable where our Saviour was born, with all its accessories. The "Angels" tried to outdo the "Children of Mary" in the beauty of the wax image of the Child Jesus, and the latter often surpassed the former in the figures of Joseph and Mary and the perfect imitation of the "horned cattle." All the girls' spare pocket-money was given to contribute to these funds, and the crèches were often beautifully and artistically made.

The splendor of the midnight mass was a sight to be remembered. Political exigencies having forbidden this ceremony in the churches, the Archbishop congregated all the splendor possible at its celebration in the convent of the Sacré Cœur. The most gorgeous robes from the sacristy of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, the most superb gold service, the number of attendant priests and acolytes, the members of the *beau monde* who obtained permission to "assist" in the railed-off enclosure before mentioned—the flowers, lights, incense, and the noble organ pealing forth the *Adeste Fideles*—completed a tableau which perfectly bewildered one, and our Protestant quartette received impressions which were ineffaceable ; one of the number, since deceased, became a nun before her death. How can parents expect their children to be uninfluenced by such an atmosphere ? True, no direct proselyting is attempted ; but the whole life is an indirect proselytism. Young people are influenced through their affection, their imagination, their instruction (even in the literature studied there is a naturally Romanist tendency) ; and yet parents are very much surprised and distressed that their children, either while there or after they leave, become Roman Catholics. One cannot blame the ladies for this ; they always discourage polemic conversation ; but can one expect that women who have given up the world to devote themselves to religion, and moreover who believe that out of the pale of their church there is no safety, should attempt to counteract, to say the least, the

Influence that the surroundings necessarily would have on any young person of sensibility?

Another cause, too, helps conversion. We all know how many otherwise excellent people express themselves with bitterness regarding the Romanists. They think that "no good can come out of Nazareth," and consequently impress upon children's minds that a Catholic must necessarily be false, deceitful, and untrustworthy. With this preconceived idea a young girl finds the ladies, to all appearance, the opposite of everything she has heard, and, indignant at thinking they have been unjustly aspersed, she naturally will believe in them, and is consequently much more open to conversion than if she had been perfectly unprejudiced. Shortly before my arrival there had been one sturdy Scotch girl who, educated in the school of John Knox, was supposed to be so steadfast in the faith that she could be sent to acquire the various Continental accomplishments, so well taught in the convent, without injury to her religious belief. In grim silence she attended the various church services (which, by the way, was obligatory on all who entered) until arrived at the festival of St. Bartholomew; there she made a stand. What! ask her to attend a service in celebration of the day when so many Protestants were murdered, and almost on the very spot where she was standing? Never! Great was the consternation of the ladies. They expostulated to no avail; they did not wish to use force. Finally, one of them went to ask the *Maîtresse Générale* what was to be done. She sent for the refractory pupil to come to her private study, and when there, asked her in the most gentle and affectionate manner what were her objections to attending service; and when they were repeated by the young belligerent very excitedly, she answered as mildly as possible, "My child, do you think that we would ask you or any one to attend a service to glorify a murder, no matter by whom or for what purpose committed? St. Bartholomew was perfectly guiltless of what took place on the day consecrated to him. We have service on that day, as we do on all the other saints' days, without the slightest reference or thought as to what has ever occurred on it; and I am sure that you will not pain us, and scandalize your companions, by refusing to attend chapel on this day more than any other."

Viewing the matter in that light, our young Protestant consented to make no more trouble; and before a year had passed that same girl was baptized in the convent and became a fervent Romanist! Thorough knowledge of human nature is the great secret of priestly and conventual government.

At the *Sacré Cœur* in Paris they will no longer receive Protestants, there having been so many conversions which have caused great ill-feeling; but here, where the institution is avowedly for the education of Protestant youth, parents should be perfectly willing that their children should become Romanists before sending them within its walls. That their minds and hearts are kept in a state of singular purity, that no bad influence from within or without can take any hold of the girls, owing to the strict surveillance exercised, is undoubtedly true; and that their education, especially in feminine acquirements and accomplishments, is of the best. Still, if you object to the religion, do not send your daughters to the Sacred Heart to be educated, and then blame either the ladies or the children if they become Roman Catholics.

F.

the Selectmen making up a report of the visit made by them that afternoon," which was perfectly satisfactory, and that he was expected back with it immediately. We then called on Mr. Edward Cutter, who gave us a history of his visit to the Convent on the Sat'd'y previous, of the visit by himself, the Selectmen & other neighbors of that afternoon, & that all the suggestions & surmises against the Ursuline Community growing out of Mrs. Mary John's leaving it, were fully cleared up,—that they were all satisfied, and that reports to this effect were to be immediately published. I had learned, the week before, from Mr. Runoy, and that day, by a paragraph in the *Courier*, headed "Mysterious," (a favorite title it seems!) that there was some popular excitement arising from a supposed restraint upon the liberty of that lady; but as I know from the character of the community, that there was not the slightest foundation for it—and as this was well known to all the pupils at the Convent, to her own relations and friends, to visitors, to Dr. Thompson and many others, I could not for a moment suspect that this excitement could lead to any disturbance. However that might be, the measure taken by the Selectmen and Mr. Cutter, seemed to leave not the slightest ground of complaint even to the most determined enemies of the institution. We could perceive no foundation to build a mob upon. Mr. Cutter also assured me, there was no danger to our children, and to our last inquiries, said in the most positive manner, that he would guarantee their safety, and that we might go home and leave them, with the utmost confidence. Relieved by this information and these assurances, we left him on our return. I suggested, however, to Mr. T. that we had better return by Charlestown neck, which would carry us down the road by the Convent, to see if there were any indications of a mob. This was about half past 8 o'clock. We saw nothing to attract attention until opposite the great gate of the avenue, where we saw four or five persons standing just within the gate-way, the gate being open. We stopped, I got out and went up to them. They appeared to be young men, or boys, standing there as if waiting for something. I made several inquiries of them individually as to the purpose of their being there, to which one answered that he came along with the rest, another that he came to see what was going on, and two or three others that they came out in consequence of what they saw in the newspaper, alluding, as I understood to the paragraph in the mercantile Journal and *Courier*, headed "Mysterious." I then informed them that the statements in that paragraph were untrue, and that they had been fully inquired into by the Selectmen and others, and were found to be entirely groundless. I then remonstrated with them for being there in pretty severe terms. At first they seemed shy and silent, but at length, being apparently irritated by the severity of my rebuke, two or three of them dropped some expressions of hostility against Catholics, against the Convent and the Irish. One spoke of the Convent as a secret society, for which there was no law in this country. Many other things were said, but nothing indicating an intended attack on the Convent that night. On the contrary, Thursday night was mentioned, as the time when "they guessed the Convent would come down."

During this conversation, which was pretty loud on my part, a considerable number of persons had collected around as if attracted by it. They appeared like people recently from work, and I supposed them to be brickmakers and others from the neighboring houses.—They appeared to be listeners merely with the exception of J. R. Buzzell who was rather boisterous, and in a special humor to fight an Irishman, if he could find one. He however, had little to say of the Convent, except that "he had whipped their Irishman;—that they knew him well there and would know more of him yet." With respect to the rest, they seemed to me to have assembled chiefly from curiosity, and although not friendly towards the Convent, were not there with any settled designs. They were neither disorderly or riotous, during the ten or fifteen minutes which we remained there nor were there probably more than fifteen or twenty persons when we came away. We had understood from Mr. Cutter, that there had been a small collection of people near there, an evening or two previous, who were easily induced by him to go away, and we supposed this collection was of the same sort, and would as easily be dispersed. As we were strangers and too well dressed to be respected by this sort of persons, we thought it best to go back to Mr. Cutter and let him

know the state of things, not doubting that he, being well-known in the neighborhood, and a man of influence, would be able to satisfy them that there was no ground of complaint, or hostility against the Nunnery, and would prevail on them to go home. Mr. Cutter, at our request promptly undertook to go and disperse them; nor did he express the slightest doubt of the result, but renewed his assurance that there was no danger to the inhabitants of Mount Benedict. We also knew that Mr. Runey, one of the Selectmen, was momentarily expected back with the report of that body; and that no information and influence, joined to Mr. Cutter's, could leave his presence for any movements against the Convent if any such were meditated. We also took it for granted, that the Selectmen, as they had deemed it necessary to examine into the causes of the public excitement that very day, would take all such measures to protect the public peace, as well as private rights, as circumstances might require. As far then as we could discern, there was no ground to apprehend any disturbance from the people we saw there; and went home with the fullest persuasion that our children would be safe for that night. With the knowledge we then had, and under the circumstances thus detailed, I would ask any reasonable man, if we ought to have apprehended, or to have believed it possible, that such a violation of law, such an outrage on defenceless and unoffending females as disgraced that night, could have taken place in the midst of a population of 80,000 inhabitants, having the reputation of a civilized, orderly and religious people?—Let the case be considered as it was then presented to our view, without permitting the judgment to be biased by the subsequent events, and I think no person not unusually timid would have seen any cause of alarm. Such is the explanation of the "mysterious" conduct of Mr. Thaxter and myself on that occasion!

I am now satisfied that the design of destroying the convent on Monday night, did not exist when we left the gate, with the people there assembled; but that it was subsequently accepted in consequence of the very measures taken by the Selectmen and Mr. Cutter to prevent it and which were communicated by them after we came away. The real fact was, of which I was then entirely ignorant, that its destruction at some time had been proposed and talked about for a long time before in Medford, Charlestown, Cambridge and Boston, by a certain class of persons, and the affair of Mrs. Mary John was merely seized upon as a pretext, to carry it into execution. Thursday night had been named as the time, but as the inquiry by Mr. Cutter on Saturday, and the Selectmen on Monday, whose reports were to be published on Tuesday, would destroy that pretence, the leaders of the mob saw that they must proceed that night, or not at all. This conclusion they had not arrived at until some time after Cutter and Runey had addressed them. Many of the amateurs, who would not willingly have been absent on the interesting occasion, actually went home, on the supposition that it was postponed. The mob, which remained, had left the Convent the second time bidding the inmates "good bye till Thursday night,"—the children were directed to go to bed and the family had nearly all retired, when the caucus was held, the signal fire resolved on as a means to recruit, their numbers, and the destruction of the Convent decided. I verily believe there would have been no mob on Monday night, but for the paragraph first published in the *Mercantile Journal* of Saturday, and copied into the *Courier* of Monday, headed "mysterious" And here let me say that the editors of those papers have never, as I believe, made any apology for the publication of that paragraph, which may have been the immediate cause of the outrages of that night. The Editor of the *Journal* has even undertaken to justify it, and to complain of being injured by the very gentle rebuke for it, contained in the report of the Boston Investigating Committee. I would now only ask, whether any respectable Editor in Boston would dare to publish such a paragraph, implicating the character or conduct of the humblest citizen, upon no better authority than mere street rumor.

The error committed by Mr. Thatcher, and myself, in leaving our children, that night, to the fury of the most heartless and brutal mob, that ever undertook to serve the cause of religion, arose, as most errors do from ignorance;—ignorance of the state of popular opinion in this neighborhood in relation to the convent and the Catholics. We were not aware of the spirit of persecution that was abroad;—of the shameless calumnies, that had been invented and industriously circulated in

[From the Boston Courier.]

THE URSULINE CONVENT.

To the Editor of the Courier.

Sir: Your paper of the 24th ult. contains an editorial article headed "Mysterious," in which, referring to the report of the trial of Buzzell, one of the convent incendiaries, you speak of the conduct of Mr. Thatcher, as 'unaccountably strange,' in that, having been drawn there by rumors calculated to alarm his fears for their safety, and having seen at the gate a gang of "riotous and disorderly persons," having also been cautioned by one of them to take away his children as "the Convent would be destroyed on Thursday night,"—he should yet have gone home without seeing his children, or giving to them, or the inmates, a word of caution, or advice, &c. In a paragraph of your paper of the next day, you disavow any intention to impute to Mr. T. a want of parental affection, and to observe that the remarks, made in relation to him, were equally applicable to me. This is certainly true; and I am not surprised at the impressions made on your mind, or on the minds of others, who had no better information than what was derived from the imperfect reports of the evidence, as given to the public. As you have seen fit to express your wonder publicly and in a way to excite the wonder of others, as well as to create doubts of the prudence or propriety of our proceedings, I feel called upon, for the sake of Mr. Thatcher, as well as myself, to explain this "strange affair," and show the facts and reasons by which we were governed. I should have done this sooner, but for the hope that Mr. Thatcher, would have saved me the trouble, and for the intervention of occupations of a more urgent nature. If in doing so, I should furnish you any new cause of wonder, I beg you would keep it to yourself, or at least solve your difficulty by private inquiry, as I have a particular aversion to being forced into a newspaper. When I went with Mr. T. to the Convent on the evening of its destruction, I had heard nothing of any intended attack on it. Although as I afterwards learned, such an intention was extensively known and talked of in my neighborhood and elsewhere, yet the rumor had not reached me, until, Mr. T. brought it from Watertown. I very naturally regarded it as an idle rumor, and as I, living in the vicinity, had not heard of it, Mr. T. very naturally fell into the same conclusion. We however, determined to go over and inquire into the matter. On our way we stopped at Mr. Rupey's, whose house is near the Convent. Mrs. R. informed us that her husband was with

the vicinity;—of the honest belief, originating in that cause, entertained by the mass of the people, that the Nunnery at Charlestown was an immoral and corrupt place, where all sorts of vice and superstition were practised;—and that protestant parents who sent their children there for instruction were guilty of a heinous sin. Yet such do we now know was the act. I have myself been told by a gentleman of very considerable standing and influence in our community, that, in his judgement, "it was more disgraceful for a protestant parent to have a child at that institution for education than to have been concerned in destroying it." This person is indeed a religious zealot of the "*strictest sect*," but an honest man and good citizen; and I mention the circumstance only to show how the minds of persons, who were wholly ignorant of the Ursuline Community had been imposed on by these abominable slanders. It also shows with how little charity, or justice, religious prejudice allows one man to judge of the conduct of others. That all the stories which have been circulated through the country, calculated and designated to bring odium upon that community, are base fabrications, I take upon me to affirm. I do so, as well to vindicate the character of these injured and unoffending females as to disabuse the minds of that portion of the public, who have been misled by these stories, but who are willing to be informed and to believe the truth. I am sorry to think, that there is another portion whose ignorance, bigotry, or sectarian zeal, renders their understandings blind to all just reasoning, and shuts their hearts to the suggestions of Christian charity. To such I do not address myself. All who have had occasion to be acquainted with the Ursulines, as far as I know, without exception, have a very high opinion of their purity and rectitude, and have never given the least credit to any stories derogatory to them in those particulars. They have seen, or heard, no evidence of the truth, that could in the smallest degree prevail against their own knowledge. I have had children there for upwards of six years, and most cheerfully do I bear my testimony, whatever it may be worth, to the excellence of their character and conduct, as far as my opportunities for observation and inquiry have enabled me to judge. Since they were driven from Mount Benedict, I have taken no inconsiderable pains to ascertain the source of these calumnies and the foundation, if any, on which they rested. I have fully satisfied myself of their utter falsehood, and I think I possess the means to satisfy any man, who has his reason and the disposition, of the same fact. But the stories, as I have heard them which reflect upon the morals of these ladies, are in themselves either improbable, absurd, or ridiculous, to such a degree, that no educated, intelligent minds would give them credit, but upon evidence that admitted of no question, or except "God had sent them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

If there be a single individual who will venture to vouch for the truth of any stories, discreditable, in a moral view, to the inhabitants of Mount Benedict, as I have heard there is, that person will stand, not only unsupported by any other evidence but will be contradicted, or I am much mistaken, by every person in or out of the Convent,—Catholic or Protestant, who has had the means of knowing the truth. There must be traits of character, beyond the mere affectation of religious duty, to sustain such a witness.

The causes which led to the destruction of the Convent,—the circumstances attending the transaction,—the difficulty of bringing the actors to justice, are fit subjects for the investigation of the philosophic historian. The extraordinary fact, that while John R. Buzzell, the New Hampshire brickmaker, recently accused, tried and acquitted, as one of the incendiaries, had his pockets filled with money, and received such other marks of popular sympathy and acknowledgment for his services and sufferings in the cause of true religion as to demand of him a public card of thanks, no minister or member of a Protestant society in the country, as far as I have heard, has ever proposed a contribution for the unfortunate Ursulines who lost their all, by this flagrant violation of their rights. This is a matter for "our special wonder." The time will come, I trust when all these matters will be rightly understood. As to the state of popular feeling which produced this catastrophe, if that be a mystery, a careful review of some of the religious journals of the day may in part explain it.

On that point, I will take the liberty to refer you to a certain Miss Rebecca Theresa Reed, alias Rebecca

Mary Agnes Theresa Reed, (as Goldsmith says, I love to give the whole name,) a Catholic Protestant as she termed herself in Court the other day, who has been about Boston and the vicinity for the last two or three years announcing herself as "the humble instrument in the hands of Providence to destroy the institution at Mount Benedict." As the great object of her pious labors has been accomplished, I doubt not she will be proud to inform you how she did it. It is possible that a book which, it is rumored, she is about to publish relative to the Nunnery, may afford the desired information; but as there is reason to apprehend that the manuscript, which has been extensively read, may undergo considerable pruning and purgation to suit the views of the publisher, it is quite doubtful if you will be able to get the whole truth, or indeed any unvarnished truth, by reading it; I should therefore advise to apply directly to herself. If she be as obliging and communicative since, as she was before the achievement of the great work, I doubt not that you may be very much enlightened in all the remaining unexplained mysteries connected with a transaction, which has left an indelible stain on the character of this part of the country,—exciting the grief of our friends and the pity of our enemies.

I have travelled a step or two beyond the limited object of this communication, but I trust my motive, which, and the correction of error, will be thought a sufficient justification.

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL P. P. FAY.

Cambridge, Jan. 2. 1835.

THE VOYAGE OF THE URSULINES.

If San Francisco should today be afflicted by the visit of some epidemic, with which her citizens should find themselves unable to cope except through aid from other sources and from other people, an appeal to France for trained nurses might bring from the *Congregation des Sœurs de St. Vincent de Paul*, in Paris, or from some similarly organized community, volunteers, who within less than three weeks from the time that the call was made, might find themselves engaged in the work to which they had been summoned. The voyage across the ocean and the transit across the continent would scarcely cause the sensation of fatigue. The change in the modes of life of the Sisters would scarcely be greater, than if they had been called from Paris to some sister city in France. Their knowledge of the events occurring daily in Paris would probably be fully equal in San Francisco to what they would have in the Provinces. Their journey would occasion no alarm to themselves nor to their friends. No fears of pirates nor of robbers would intimidate them. No doubts about the character of the place to which they were going would harass them. They would leave one field of Christian work for another, where they would be gratefully received and kindly treated; and beyond the perils incident to their vocation, would know no cause for fear in making such a journey.

How different the circumstances which surrounded the little band of Ursulines, which, but a little over a century and a half ago, founded the convent at New Orleans. How difficult it is to realize the changes which have taken place in so brief a time. It is only when we chance upon some bit of history, like the Voyage of the Ursulines, that we are able by juxtaposition to bring out the strong lines of contrast between the conditions of now and then.

The adoption by the Company of the Indies of New Orleans as their head-quarters,

in 1722, gave that place its first vitality; and very soon after this event the colonists in the growing village felt the need of a hospital for their sick, and of a school for their children. In September, 1726, the Company of the Indies entered into a contract with the Ursulines of Rouen, whereby these nuns undertook to send out six sisters, who would establish a school in the infant city, in which they would act as teachers, and who would also perform the duties of nurses in the hospital which the company was to build. In October, the nuns and novices who were to expatriate themselves in the performance of this humane service assembled at Paris, at the residence of the Ursulines of St. Jacques. They were detained at Paris until the eighth of December, when they started for Lorient, where they were to embark for Louisiana.

Marie Madelaine Hachard, whose letters to her father furnish the materials for this sketch, was admitted to her novitiate the day she left Rouen, and took the veil while the little company waited at the convent at Hennebon. Accompanying the first letter which she forwarded from New Orleans, was a *Relation* of the voyage, to which she signed her name as if she were the author. A *Relation* closely resembling this has been attributed to the Lady Superior of the convent. The suggestion has been made that "Hachard de Saint Stanislas," as she signs herself, acted as the amanuensis of her Lady Superior, and therefore felt at liberty to enclose the *Relation* to her parents.

The pages of the letters of this young girl are full of earnest devotion for the religious work to which she has consecrated her life. Her regrets at the painful and permanent separation from her friends find compensation in the thought of the glorious work in store for her. She knew that she was to endure hardships and encounter dangers; that her labor was to be among negroes and Indians; but it may well be doubted if in the

innocence of her youth and the seclusion of the convent at Rouen, she had heard of the character of the emigration which had been forced upon the Colony of Louisiana, during the days when the Company and the government of France were almost synonymous terms. Among the older sisters of this devoted band, there must have been some who fully appreciated the fact that the prisons and the hospitals of Paris had been called upon to furnish a part of the colonists among whom they were to labor. The gossiping French memorialists of the day spare a few lines from their descriptions of the debaucheries of the Court, to depict the sufferings of these miserable emigrants, in their forced marches from Paris to the ports where they embarked. Goaded on by troops of archers, dependent for food upon the charity of the country through which they passed, all provision for their suitable shelter neglected, their sufferings while *en route* attracted universal attention, and drew forth, even in those days, words of sympathy from those who seldom wasted pity on the unfortunate.

Shut off from communication with the outer world, the Ursulines generally could have known but little of what agitated the people of France; but there were scattered along the route from Paris to the sea-port towns, convents of the order, and knowledge of these events must have come to the ears of their inmates. Probably at some of the towns at which this little company stopped on its way to Lorient, the resident sisters had helped in alleviating the sufferings of some part of these forced emigrants, and it is but natural to suppose that some among the company were aware of this addition to the weight of labor which was before them. However that may be, no other thought than earnest desire to reach the seat of their labor, and to begin the work which they had set for themselves, seems to have possessed their souls.

They were nine days on the road from Paris to Hennebon. The condition of the highways, especially after leaving Alençon, was shocking. They were often obliged to walk for miles, and their carriage, even when relieved of the weight of its inmates, would

sink in the mire, so that the numerous cattle and horses which were attached to it could only drag it along at a snail's pace. Starting, perhaps, before dawn, they often did not reach their sleeping place till late at night. They were the guests, in some of the towns, of the resident sisters of their order; but they did not accept all such offers of hospitality, through fear of disturbing the ordinary arrangement of the affairs of their would-be hosts. Gaping crowds of provincials gathered at some places, to see the nuns who were about to make this perilous sacrifice make their morning start.

Finally the tedious journey was ended, and the little party, consisting of eight professed nuns, two novices, one lay sister, and two servants, were gathered together, but a few miles from Lorient, beneath the roof of the convent of Hennebon. Here they were obliged to wait upwards of two months before the vessel in which they were to sail, and which they expected to have found ready for them on arrival, was announced to be fitted for sea. It was on the 19th of January, 1727, while the party was thus waiting at Hennebon, that Madelaine Hachard, with much solemnity, took the name of Saint Stanislas. On this occasion Madame Tranchepain, the Lady Superior of the New Orleans company, entertained the whole community of Hennebon. The day after that on which Madelaine took the veil, they gave her a black veil, which she was to keep during the entire voyage. When the time drew near for sailing, the party went down to Lorient. During their stay there they were the guests of a wealthy merchant, in whose house they found accommodations for seclusion and worship almost as great as they would have found in a community.

On the 22d of February, Madelaine closes the letter describing the foregoing events: "The wind is fair," she says, "and we have just been told that we must go on board in an hour." And then, as the memory of home and friends poured in upon her, affection asserted itself, and the conflict between her regret at leaving her parents, and joy that the opportunity will soon be afforded her to en-

ture and to perform in the great work which she has undertaken, may plainly be discerned in her letter. She describes the joy of the community at the summons on board as too great to be told; as for herself, it is moderated by her sorrow at leaving her father and her dear mother, whose lively memory she will preserve all her life. Nothing but the voice of God could separate her from parents whose tenderness she has proved a thousand times. Her last words to them must have wrung their hearts, as they thought of the dread uncertainty of the fate before her—danger from shipwreck; danger from savages; danger from climate; a voyage to a region concerning which so little was known that her father could not purchase a chart which showed the location of the little city to which his daughter had gone; a land which, however full of promise for adventurers and laborers, must prove full of hardships for those whose experience had been confined within convent walls. Even if the stories of danger were exaggerated, there was enough of doubt in the situation to stir up the hearts of these parents, as they read the closing lines of this letter:

“Adieu, my dear father. I beg of you, send me dear news. There is nothing in the world dearer to me than yourself and my dear mother. Rest assured that nothing less than the glorification of God and the salvation of his poor savages could separate me from your dear selves. I assure you that I shall only be separated from you in body. In spirit and heart I shall always be united with you; but as I can do nothing myself, I address myself to heaven, the source of all blessings. I pray each day for the preservation of your health and the sanctification of your souls. I beseech you not to forget a daughter who will all her life entertain for you the most profound respect and perfect gratitude.”

The “Gironde” was slow, but she was a strong and well built vessel. Her captain may have been a competent sailor, but some of the disasters which occurred during the voyage were plainly chargeable to the neglect of precautions which would have averted

them. Of her crew we hear no complaints. They responded promptly and willingly to the demands upon them, and their only fault seems to have been that in times of excitement they flavored their conversation with too much profanity to suit the tastes of a community of nuns.

The fair wind which caused the closing up of letters, and the hurrying aboard of passengers, on the 22d of February, soon drew ahead, and a postponement of the hour of starting gave the nuns an opportunity, before they plunged into the Atlantic swell, to settle down in the little cabin, eighteen feet long, and seven or eight wide, which had been partitioned off for them between decks. Six bunks had been built on each side this narrow space, in tiers of three. Here, for the next five months, a large part of which was to be spent in the tropics, were to be packed thirteen people. One of the party had to sleep on the deck.

On the 23d, at two o'clock in the afternoon, the day being fair and the wind propitious, the “Gironde” weighed anchor and started on her voyage. Their first experience of the character of the ship and of its manager was to be felt while still in sight of Lorient. The nuns were assembled on the poop, taking their last look at their native land. The ship had reached a point where she began to feel the ocean swell, when all felt a sharp shock, and twice the vessel struck on a rock. All was dismay and confusion among the spectators on the shore, as well as among the inmates of the ship. A hasty examination was made, and upon its being discovered that no serious harm was done, the vessel started once more on her tedious voyage. The strain occasioned her to leak somewhat, but not enough to make them apprehend serious danger.

Unfortunately, rumors of the disaster, magnified and distorted by repetition, as such rumors always are, reached the ears of those left behind, and it was to be many a weary month before they should learn the truth.

The fair wind soon deserted them, and they were tossed about for a fortnight, baffled by tempestuous weather and contrary

winds, in their attempts to get ahead. At the end of that time, they were not three days' sail from Lorient. Forty-nine of the sheep, and nearly all the fowls which had been placed on board, in order that the passengers and crew might have fresh provisions, had been drowned or smothered, and were thrown overboard. They were reduced to a diet of particularly bad salt provisions, and had made so little headway that it was evident that they had not water enough on board to supply their wants during the passage to Louisiana.

For the purpose of renewing supplies, the captain put into the Island of Madeira, on the 12th of March. The news that there was a company of nuns on board spread through the city soon after the "Gironde" had dropped anchor. The Fathers of the Company of Jesus, connected with a college in the city, were among the first to come and pay their respects to the Jesuit Fathers who were escorting the Ursulines to Louisiana. Presents of fruit and fresh provisions were sent on board, and cordial invitations were extended the nuns to come on shore. The Ursulines determined, however, to remain on board ; and at the end of three days, during which the captain renewed his supply of water, they set sail once more.

The monotony of the voyage was relieved by a fair wind which lasted two days, when it again drew ahead, so that they were a long while making two hundred leagues. Here they met a strange vessel, which they took to be a pirate. The "Gironde" was cleared for action. The guns were loaded, and everybody took his station. The secular women were dressed like men to give an appearance of greater numbers. The nuns, armed with their beads, were shut up between decks. Thanks to the Lord, they were not sad. None of the company showed signs of weakness. The officers and passengers who had seemed ready to fight were not, however, brought to a critical test. The hostile ship, after having sailed about the "Gironde" several times, evidently concluded that the encounter was not worth while, and left them at liberty to pursue the voyage.

On Good Friday they arrived "under the Tropic, or the line of the Sun," but on account of the holiness of the day, the nonsense of the sailors, peculiar to the occasion, was postponed until Saturday, after dinner. Exemption was purchased for the Ursulines, the Reverend Fathers, and their servants, by payment of two pistoles. Those passengers who could not pay had several bucketfuls of water poured over them.

A few days after, they met another vessel, apparently a corsair. Again they put themselves on the defensive, and as the vessel hovered about for several hours, now approaching, now retiring, they kept sharp watch all night ; but no attack was made on them.

Except the bare mention of their narrow quarters and of the execrable character of the food, there is no word of complaint, and nothing to impress upon the mind of the reader the sufferings of these delicate women, while drifting beneath a tropical sun through this region of calms and light winds, packed away like sardines in their wretched little cabin. What did trouble them, however, was the fact that they had no chance for seclusion. There was no time nor place for private spiritual exercises. They were in the midst of a class of people whose every thought was of some method of enjoyment by means of which to while away time.

Notwithstanding this lack of seclusion and this too close contact with the worldly, some consolation was found in the fact that the holy sacrifice of the mass was celebrated every day, and they had thus the good fortune frequently to fortify themselves with the sacred body of Jesus. They had sermons, too, from the chaplain of the ship, and from the Reverend Fathers, their companions. Prayers four times a day, at four and at eight o'clock in the morning, at five and at eight in the evening, helped to keep them in a comfortably religious frame of mind. Grand mass and vespers were chanted every Sunday and on fête days. On Good Friday they adored the cross after the passion in a very devout manner. The Ursulines were the first to adore the cross, with naked feet ;

afterward, the Reverend Fathers, the officers, the passengers, and the crew, in a very respectful manner. At the time of the Holy Sacrament, they made a procession around the capstan. Nor did they fail to say the Angelus four times a day. Thus their pious devotions helped divert their minds from the weary monotony of the days, as they drifted by—days which came to be counted by weeks, and finally became months, and still they saw no land.

Yearning more and more for the wished-for land of promise, they redoubled their vows and prayers for favorable weather. At last the Lord granted a few intervals of fair winds, taking advantage of which they reached the island of Saint Domingo on or about the 4th of May. Here the poor creatures had a chance once more to procure fresh provisions, and to meet some of their fellow countrymen. There was no hospitable convent to welcome them within its walls, but the Company placed a warehouse at their service, of which they joyfully took possession. During the fifteen days which they spent on this island, they were hospitably entertained by the officers in charge. The narrative acknowledges the grateful appreciation of this treatment.

On the 19th of May they reëmbarked, and the "Gironde" again started with a fair wind, only to lose it in a short time, and to encounter again the calms and head winds which had characterized the weather during the greater part of this voyage. While thus drifting about, they found themselves in company with three privateers, who hung around for three days without molesting them. A boat was then lowered from one of the privateers, and came alongside the "Gironde," under pretense of desiring to purchase some wine; but the captain ordered it off, without permitting any of these questionable characters to come on board. Apparently the pirates saw enough to convince them that it was the part of prudence not to follow the matter further, and drew off, thus relieving the passengers on the "Gironde" from further apprehension.

Head winds and the currents of the Gulf

forced them out of their course towards an island called Blanche. Their joy at sight of this land was at first very great, and after dinner they assembled upon the poop, to watch it as they should approach. While congratulating each other that the voyage was so nearly ended, the ship struck, and was forced into the sand with such sharp and repeated shocks, that they gave themselves up as lost. With beads in hand, every nun said her *In manus*, thinking that all was over, and that they had reached the place where would be found the only establishment which their company would make in America. The captain, who was below at dinner, thus leaving his vessel in charge of his subordinates while boldly approaching an unknown coast, came on deck. Sails were clewed up, and their position examined. The ship had burrowed her way into the sand, and was helpless. The rudder swung to and fro with the waves. The crew then set to work to lighten the ship. First, all the ballast, consisting of stones, lead, and old iron, was thrown into the sea. Then all the sugar which had been bought or given to passengers or crew, at Saint Domingo, was thrown overboard. Then a lot of brandy was sent after the sugar. Meantime, as part after part of the ship's cargo was thrown into the ocean without effect, the captain hungrily eyed the personal baggage of the passengers, and several times it was concluded that this must go next. While all this was going on, tales were interchanged between the passengers of the character of the savages whom they might expect to encounter on the island, in case they were compelled to abandon the ship and make a landing. The nuns were told that these Indians not only ate the whites, but made them suffer torments beforehand a thousand times worse than death. The passengers were, however, spared the impending loss of their wearing apparel and the threatened torture from the savages. The ship, after being aground for nearly twenty-four hours, at last yielded to the efforts of the sailors, and floated off.

When the tide was favorable for their further progress, the captain made sail again,

but before he had gone a quarter of a league the "Gironde" brought up again on the bottom. Here she was thumped by the waves upon the sand with such force that all hope on the part of the Ursulines was lost. The sailors got out boats and anchors to try and kedge the ship off. The passengers dropped on their knees, and offered prayer to their patron saints. Notwithstanding all this maltreatment, the staunch ship still floated, and was successfully relieved from her dangerous position. Then the captain seemed to have learned that the lead might be of use to him, for he sent his long boat ahead to take soundings, and profiting by what was thus disclosed, made deep water.

Meanwhile, they had been so long making the trip that they were running out of fresh water. Their entire allowance, under the burning summer sun of the Gulf, was but a pint a day. Wine, also, was reduced to the same ratio, which the Ursulines exchanged for water, bottle for bottle. For more than fifteen days after this, they spent the greater part of the time at anchor; raising it at every favorable breeze, but dropping it again when the wind died out, to avoid being swept back by the currents. Their course brought them toward the coast of Florida, near Pensacola, and here they secured some drinking water, by landing on an island and digging in the sand near the shore. They were detained here several days by head winds, and were several days more in reaching Dauphin Island, where the ship was boarded by friends from the shore, and news of the progress of affairs at New Orleans was thus conveyed to them. From this point to the mouth of the river, they were apparently fanned with a fair wind; and on the 23d of July, 1717, five months from the day of starting, they reached the point where they were to abandon the "Gironde" and take to boats.

No provision had been made for their transportation from this place to New Orleans, and they were obliged to wait until boats could be sent down to them. They were invited by the officer in charge of the port, to make his house their home during this detention, and on the twenty-sixth day

they left the "Gironde." Their boat was over-loaded, a head wind sprang up, and for a short time they were probably in the gravest peril that had threatened them since their departure from home. They succeeded, however, in making a landing on one of the little mud islands at the mouth of the river, where they spent the night. From this point Sieur Duverg , their escort and host, made signals and sent messengers for boats. Three dug-outs were sent to them, in which they succeeded in reaching Balize without further adventure.

They remained here, the guests of Sieur Duverg , six days. Meantime, news of their arrival had reached New Orleans and created a great sensation. Their long voyage had greatly alarmed everybody, and many had concluded that they were lost. A boat and two dug-outs were sent down, and the party was distributed among them. "It must be admitted," says the author of the *Relation*, "that all the fatigues of the 'Gironde' were not to be compared with those we had on this little journey of only thirty leagues, from Balize up the river to New Orleans, which is ordinarily made in six days." The dug-out, in which Madame Tranchepain and Madelaine Hachard took passage, was some days in reaching New Orleans. The rest of the party arrived the next day. Exhausted by the fatigues of their protracted sea voyage, the discomforts of their journey by boat told upon their worn-out frames, and stamped it upon their memories as a period of torture and suffering. Unable to sit upright or move about in the dug-outs, the journey by day was tedious and painful. But little relief was experienced at night; for an hour before sundown they would land on the low, muddy banks of the river and warm their salt provisions for supper in the boatmen's saucepan. The sailors would then prepare shelters for them, by cutting canes and fixing them in the earth so as to form little huts, into each of which two of the nuns would creep, and then the sailors would cover them over with a sail to keep the mosquitoes and other insects out. Twice during the trip they woke up to find themselves flooded in their beds;

and during all this exposure by day and by night, they were unable to change their clothes. It is not to be wondered at, that these last few days of their journey broke many of the sisters down, and that they arrived at New Orleans having among their number several suffering invalids.

The Ursuline Convent was not ready for their reception, and indeed, was not finished for several years after ; but the Company had secured the house which Bienville had built for himself, and there the Ursulines were lodged, until their convent should be built. They were at once ready for work, and that part of their work which related to instruction was ready for them.

Their seclusion was so complete, that they saw but little of New Orleans itself, and knew but little of its inhabitants. Nine months after their arrival, Madelaine Hachard wrote her father : " Our city is very pretty, well-built, regularly laid out, so far as I know, and as it seemed to me the day that we arrived, for since that day we have remained in seclusion." The inhabitants were proud of the place, and claimed that, in appearance, it rivaled Paris, but this opinion was not endorsed by the nuns so recently from that metropolis.

There was as much display and politeness as in France. Women cared but little for what concerned their salvation, but were alive to what affected their vanity. Velvets, damasks, and ribbons were common, although their cost was three times the price in France. Rouge and patches were used there as elsewhere. The market furnished an abundance of fruits and vegetables. Hunters brought in from the forests and prairies, deer and bears and buffaloes, ducks and wild turkeys, partridges and quail. Fishermen furnished a large variety of excellent fish, most of which were new to the Ursulines.

In short, after the trials of the voyage, a great variety of nourishing food was always at their command when the fasts of the Church permitted them to enjoy it ; but from much of it they abstained for fear of becoming fastidious.

Their Reverend Father was full of zeal, but the work that he had to accomplish staggered these gentle Christians ; for the place was full of "debauchery, bad faith, and all the other vices." In their own special work, they were shocked at the moral condition of the young girls, whom it was the custom to marry at the age of twelve or fourteen years, when they did not even know how many Gods there were. Raised in the country, five or six leagues from the city, some of their scholars had never been confessed, had never been at mass, had never heard God spoken of.

The ground was fallow which they had undertaken to work, and, as the time approached for Madelaine Hachard's profession, we can appreciate the sincerity with which she says : " I cannot tell you the pleasure I shall take in pronouncing my vows in a foreign land, where Christianity is almost unknown."

This glimpse at the condition of New Orleans, as it appeared to the French Ursulines, in the Spring of 1728, which has just been brought before our eyes, is taken from the last of the letters of Madelaine Hachard in the little collection which has furnished the material for this article. While the whole atmosphere of the letter is filled with the same sweetness, and tender, respectful affection for her parents which characterized her farewell letter from France, she is not appalled at the magnitude of the work which has been revealed to her ; but the further she advances, the more she thanks the Lord for having chosen her for so holy a vocation.

Andrew McFarland Davis.

I WON'T BE A NUN;

OR, THE NAUTICAL ADVENTURE OF A YOUNG LADY.

A singularly romantic affair has just been brought to our notice, namely, that of a female sailor, having arrived here some days ago in the ship *Bucephalus*. We understand that she is a very comely interesting girl of eighteen, the daughter of a British officer, and related to an English nobleman, who, having the misfortune to lose her mother at an early age, was placed in our English convent, with the view ultimately of taking the veil. Whilst a boarder in this place, she for sake of her health, visited occasionally some friends in the neighborhood, where in the house of one, she first met the object of her attachment, now an officer in one of the native regiments. Subsequently she was consigned to a convent in Dublin, to the end that she should take the veil. Here she remained some months; but resisting every argument to induce her to do so, privation, suffering, and cruel treatment at the hands of the lady superior were her lot; she fell sick, and was conveyed to an hospital, whence through the connivance of a young English lady, an inmate of the convent, who supplied her with the means, she made her escape in the disguise of a boy, and formed the resolution of coming out to Bombay, in search of the young officer above mentioned. We are told it would occupy a volume were we to recount all her wanderings, and the sufferings and privations of the poor young creature in her endeavors to get on board a ship bound for Bombay. This at last she accomplished. A few days after the ship sailed, "the strange boy," on being questioned by the captain whence he came, proved to be a young lady; a cabin was humanely allotted to her at once, and she was treated exactly as a lady passenger.

"Truth is strange—stranger than fiction;"

and here is romance in real life that decidedly elucidates the saying of the poet. We understand that this young lady's history has excited considerable interest and admiration among the society at Bombay. Probably the whole ample page of fiction could not present an instance of greater determination and constancy than is exemplified by this case.—*Bombay Times*.